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TO COME TO THE HORSES

THE use of a communiqué as a weapon for the concealment of plans and intentions was never more properly or successfully illustrated than by the spate of official statements at the close of the Casablanca conference. The world has been told that President and Premier, with their staffs of experts, have met and, after "unprecedented discussions" of "global strategy," reached complete agreement on the enterprises which are to be undertaken in 1943. Their commendable purpose will be to "draw as much weight as possible off the Russian armies by engaging the enemy as heavily as possible at the best selected points." Since this general intention has been explicit in Anglo-American planning ever since Mr. Churchill's visit to Washington last autumn, it must be presumed that more specific military decisions have now been taken. These have been communicated to Stalin, whose preoccupations with a vast offensive in being prevented his accepting the invitation to participate in the Casablanca causerie. That sounds convincing enough, but why, if Stalin was only prevented from attendance by prior engagements, were not Molotov and Russian military experts present at these vital discussions of global strategy?

The selection of Morocco as a meeting-place could hardly have been designed to give additional emphasis to the affirmation that only "unconditional surrender" by the three Axis Powers would satisfy Britain and the United States. Nor was it necessary to go to Africa to discuss future Anglo-American operations. Obviously the grave political impasse in French North Africa figured largely on the agenda; no doubt it was held to call for examination on the spot by President and Premier in person. The only concrete change that is immediately apparent from their meeting is that Generals Giraud and de Gaulle met and "shook hands." They agree (they could hardly do otherwise) that unity of Frenchmen for the defeat of Germany and the liberation of France is desirable; but, in public at least, all they propose to do is to interchange missions—a procedure which appears to crystallise the severance of their respective pseudo-sovereignties. Politically French North Africa remains in the hands of its Vichyist Imperial Council; Peyrouton is apparently to remain. In the military sphere no confirmation was forthcoming of widely canvassed newspaper stories that General Eisenhower is to hand over to General Alexander, whose forces, having captured Tripoli, will soon be entering a zone over which the American general is Commander-in-Chief.

For the moment, therefore, we are asked to take it on trust that the Casablanca conference, despite the absence of the Russian and Chinese leaders, marked an important stage in framing a combined strategy for the United Nations. The magnitude of the tasks involved must not be minimised if we hope to secure victory on satisfactory terms and without risk of hostilities so prolonged as to involve ruin for victors and vanquished. Last November, when Rommel's defeat at El Alamein was followed by the Anglo-American landings in French North Africa and by the great Russian counter-offensive across the Don, it looked as though the United Nations had at long last wrested the strategic initiative from the Axis. Their prime objective now must be to prevent Hitler recapturing it in either the military or the political field. Yet, bearing in mind that the initiative may be taken in defensive, no less than in offensive, operations, we dare hardly say that we hold it securely. The future rate of losses by U-boat attack is highly problematic: it is by no means certain that the U.S. Government has allocated nearly as high a priority to counter-measures against submarines as Germany has to their construction. When due allowance is made for habitual exaggeration, German sinking claims, particularly of tankers, are disquietingly high; and the best-laid plans for the conquest of a Continent approachable only across the sea are liable to be upset or, at best, seriously delayed if the tonnage available proves to be inadequate. Moreover, it is not sufficient to rely, for preservation of the initiative, on Russia's successes alone.

In ten weeks the Russian army groups in the South have engaged and destroyed or routed over 100 Axis divisions, capturing 200,000 prisoners and 13,000 guns. We do not belittle the magnificent achievement of the Soviet Union or under-rate its capacity for still greater eventual triumphs, if we assert that the Western Democracies have no right to assume that the impetus of this great winter offensive can be maintained indefinitely, with no pause for recuperation. His great Don-Volga salient smashed, Hitler has been compelled to evacuate nearly three-quarters of his 1942 territorial gains; but, excluding satellite troops, his lost and routed divisions represent less than one-fourth of his army. By withdrawing from the Caucasus and the Don Bend to positions behind the Donetz he has eased his supply problems, and he has had time to bring forward fresh divisions from Poland, Germany and, so the Russians assert, from France. With less than two per cent. of his land forces engaged in Africa, he can still concentrate a formidable defensive strength on the Eastern Front. Hitler may still hope to stabilise a line between Baltic and Black Sea and secure a breathing space in which to regroup his formations and rest exhausted troops. Given such a reprieve, Hitler and not the United Nations might decide the next move in the battlefields.

Is it in Hitler's power to recover the political initiative forfeited when the Allied intervention in French North Africa forced on Germany the necessity of occupying the Vichy France whose willingness to collaborate had been exploited as the New Order's best advertisement? Once again a sober appreciation of possibilities is called for. It will hardly have escaped notice in Berlin that Stalin's latest Order of the Day exhorted the Russian armies to march "forward to the routing of the German invaders and *their expulsion over the boundaries of our motherland.*" We do not propose to read too much into this method of defining Russian victory, though it is not the first time that Stalin has employed this phraseology. Quite possibly, being a realist, he deliberately avoids "à Berlin" flamboyancy in his Orders. Possibly again, he may conceive that appeals to his soldiers' love of their country are more effective on occasion than exhortations to liberate the Poland of M. Sikorski or to

invade and destroy Hitlerite Germany. Possibly, too, he may both have desired to counter Dr. Goebbels' propaganda line ("Fight, or the Bolsheviks will ravage your homes") and have also intended to remind London and Washington that Russia's conception of adequate victory depends on the adequacy of her Allies' contribution to it. We suggest no more than that. But suppose that 1943 passed with no really effective second front opened by Anglo-American exertions, and with the German armies—weakened further by Russian attacks but not disintegrated—still on Russian soil. If Hitler in those circumstances withdrew behind the Curzon Line while Russia was able to occupy those territorial positions in Finland and Rumania that Stalin regards as essential for Russian security, would there be any reason, in the absence of comprehensive United Nations agreement, for Stalin to risk the loss of further man-power?

Such considerations must have figured largely in the discussions of Premier and President. The awkward possibility of Russia regarding the British and American war effort as totally inadequate and so, in effect, arranging to make the war, as it were, a private fight, must have competed in their minds with the alternative possibility, also unpleasant, that Britain and America would not succeed in reaching the Continent before a Russian victory. For these reasons it may well be that behind the vague phrases of the communiqué there is a real plan for hastening a second front. We note the phrase that the enemy is to be engaged "as heavily as possible at the best selected points." We trust that the use of the plural noun implies that operations will not be confined to the Mediterranean. However attractive theoretically may be the idea of attacking the "under-belly," seeking the softest spots in Axis defences, the practical consideration must be kept in mind that the maintenance in Southern Europe of invading armies, whose ultimate bases are Britain and the United States, involves a staggering strain on shipping. To some extent the effective strength of the armies in this theatre must be limited—it may be somewhat narrowly—by tonnage available and the rate of loss which can be afforded of ships and cargoes. When command of the Mediterranean by sea and air is secured the Western Allies can clearly create there diversions on what may be a major and most useful scale, compelling the enemy to spread his dwindling resources and so weaken his defences on other fronts. But it is difficult to believe that an Anglo-American offensive against Germany can be delivered *and sustained* on a scale which would constitute a decisive "second front" except in an area whose lines of communication would be more economical of shipping—the crux of Allied strategy.

The Fate of the Highlands

The Bill for hydro-electric development of the Highlands has been laid before the Commons. Its advocates say that the Highlands are derelict, and that the people must be enabled to raise their standard of living; secondly, that scheme after scheme to develop water-power has been defeated and that something must be done now; thirdly, that this plan is better than its predecessors because the production (though not the distribution) of the power is to be publicly controlled. The opponents agree, of course, with the first proposition; there is no suggestion that the Highlands should be kept as they are. They oppose this method because the Report so plainly is interested in subsidising Big Business to the exclusion of other possibilities. The Highlands, according to their view, should be regarded as a whole, and their resources should be developed primarily for the benefit of their own people and secondarily as part of a general plan for Scotland. Their resources are three—farming, fishery, forestry and the industries derived from them; the beauty of the scenery, and water-power. The electricity report refuses to consider the first as of any importance, and argues that in order to produce vast quantities of power for export the scenery must be sacrificed—for the proposed amenities committee is to have no power and is obviously a mere semblance. This is putting the cart before the horse. The right procedure is to make a plan for the post-war agriculture and industry of Scotland, and to decide what electric development is needed to carry out its production and to supply electric light to all the people. The industry the Report is sure of is the production of carbide, which is to be done at Fort William, an unhealthy and unsuitable site for a town. But since a carbide factory will only need some 250,000,000 units of power, there seems no reason why such works should not be sited on some other of the seventy sources of power on the west coast. The case for carbide is that it is a munition of war, so that it clearly should be a national industry. There is, however, no hurry about the measure. It cannot take effect till after the war for it is inconceivable that the work of construction should not be done by Highlanders, and Highland labour is available. If the works were begun now, it could only be with imported Irish labour. We cannot believe that the Government will adopt a wrongly based plan simply out of irritated impatience. There are various points to consider now. What is the plan for Scotland being framed by Mr. Johnstone's committee at Edinburgh; were its members consulted on the power-scheme; and does it fit into their conception of Scottish industry and trade after the war? Why, in a matter of such vital importance, did not the Committee of Enquiry publish its evidence; and should not its records be made public so that the nation can judge of the interests involved? Should not the alternative plans, for national electricity supplied to the people, and used to start industries on a dispersed plan which would cover much more than, while including electro-metallurgical works, be considered by Parliament? Are the companies which it is proposed to subsidise Scottish, British, or subsidiaries of international cartels? Is it proposed to limit their profits or to earmark them for the benefit of the Highlands?

The Public Schools and Their Defenders

The London County Council, in its evidence offered to the Public Schools Committee, has come down plump against the public schools in their present form. This is a salutary answer to those "progressive" friends of the public schools who are arguing that all they need is a little democratisation through the admission of a limited number of scholarship pupils financed by the local authorities and the State, and that, in the name of educational freedom, nothing must be done to prevent them from continuing their existence outside the system of public education, or from receiving on those terms State aid designed to ensure their ability to survive almost unaltered into the post-war world. There may be a case for not putting all higher education directly under the control of the existing Local Education Authorities; but to the extent to which there is such a case, it is a case for creating larger authorities capable of taking charge of the higher forms of secondary education over adequate areas, and not a case for leaving the public schools as they are—much less for buttressing up the less successful of them with grants of public money. The case for the public schools is argued as a rule almost entirely by the advocates of an expensive boarding school education as a necessary instrument for training in leadership. But, in fact, the majority even of the schools connected with the Headmasters' Conference are not predominantly boarding schools, and the majority of them would fit perfectly well into a regional, as distinct from a purely local, system of provision for higher secondary education.

Miners and Owners Agree

The miners and mine-owners seem to be at last on the point of agreeing on a scheme for a national joint body to conduct negotiations about wages and conditions for their industry as a whole. The miners have, of course, been pressing for such a body for a great many years; but the owners have always answered that their own national association has been given no negotiating power, and have made every endeavour to break up the coalfields into small, separate units for purposes of collective bargaining. Some local bargaining there is, of course, bound to be, owing to the marked differences in conditions from one coalfield to another. But local negotiation about local matters is entirely reconcilable with national adjustments of general issues, including general changes in wage-rates as well as in hours of labour and other matters of common concern to the whole industry. The full details of the new scheme, which is being referred for acceptance to the district associations on both sides, has not yet been published; but it is understood to follow the accepted pattern of negotiating machinery in the mining industry, with provisions for the reference of disputed questions to impartial chairmen of the various boards. The mine-owners' change of front on this issue is doubtless due largely to the fact that their industry is now subject to public control, which means that labour as well as other issues have to be considered on a national basis. But it may be due also to the desire of the owners to come to terms with the miners in such a way as to weaken their will to get the industry transferred to public ownership. In effect, coal-mining has been, since the Act of 1930, a close monopolistic corporation, supported but not controlled by the State. The miners have been outside the corporation, but not wholly hostile to it, because the regulation of prices by the owners has reacted favourably on their wages—which, bad as they are, are better than they were in the terrible years after the General Strike. The public, of course, is not considered as having any claim.

The News in the House (*by a Parliamentary Correspondent*)

The Roosevelt-Churchill conversations and the meeting of the de Gaulle and Giraud drove reports of the debate on the new Minister of Town and Country Planning from the front pages of the newspapers. This was unfortunate, as the Bill, although disappointingly vague as to the power of the new Minister, is the first important piece of legislation concerning Post-war Reconstruction. The Minister, however, once set up, is to decide what powers he wants, and then come to Parliament and ask for them. It will be some indication of whether W. S. Morrison means business to see what powers he asks for. Greenwood hit the nail on the head when he urged the necessity of dealing with Town and Country Plans as part of the general machinery of national planning. He suggested the erection of some kind of Home Front Cabinet composed of the Ministers of the departments concerned. This should co-ordinate their work, although there should be a single Minister to supervise the operation of the plans agreed to. The only other contribution of interest to the debate was from Willink, who attacked the Corporation of London for replanning the City without reference to anybody else. He put over a strong case for the replanning of London, but looked at from a national standpoint. Dissatisfaction with the North African position has not died down in the House, although questions about Peyrouton were postponed until more was known of the de Gaulle-Giraud talks. There is a marked feeling among those who want a reasonable post-war world that quislings of the Peace are only too likely to materialise all over Europe as Hitler's power wanes. The Beveridge Report is through its honeymoon period. The insurance companies are mobilising their opposition; already M.P.s are beginning to feel resentment at the pressure brought on them by deputations from agents and the increasing evidence of propaganda against the scheme on the doorstep. The Tories are certainly divided about the report

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SECOND CHANCE?

WHAT is the answer to the question put by Mr. Michael Straight in the article we publish in this issue? Must we lose the peace again? Mr. Straight has turned back the pages of history; he finds both in America and in Britain that the plans for the promised new social order were more advanced and more practically supported than the promises of today, and he reads in journals like the *New Republic* and the *New Statesman* of twenty-five years ago the story of how these promises were betrayed. The analogies are terribly obvious. Admittedly there are striking differences; most important of all is the world impact of the Soviet Union which invited hostility in 1918 as a revolutionary bogy, but which in 1943 has become a great Power likely to prove the main instrument in the aggressor's defeat. Other world changes—the new political consciousness at work in Asia and throughout the coloured peoples, for instance—are also reminders that history never exactly repeats itself. But Mr. Straight is dealing mainly with the relation of popular aspiration to governmental promises in Great Britain and America. And that indeed seems likely to be in 1943 very much what it was in 1917.

Once again, at the end of this war, there will be the fact of unified public control of the main services and the main commodities on which civilisation depends. The world's shipping was at the disposal of the public in 1918; it was handed back to private ownership. Apparently our governments plan the same folly to-day. More important still, aviation, which could become, without great difficulty to-day, the guarantee and the symbol of a new world unity, may develop, not into the splendid international air service which we all desire, but rather become the centre of a national and private rivalry. One after another the basic materials of the world's prosperity became in time of war subject to control. To-day, as in 1919, all the forces of private profit press upon governments to scrap these beginnings of sane organisation lest some individuals should lose money and power.

Can we look with confidence to the Socialist leaders? They were right about international anarchy and private capitalism, about unemployment, about the struggle for markets and materials, about the conditions from which Hitlers and international and civil wars inevitably arise. Experience should give them the confidence to preach their socialism, justified in a million graves, with a far greater passion and persuasion than ever. Yet Mr. Straight will find no comfort from their utterances. How few of these leaders stand up for what in their hearts they still know to be true! They allow young Conservatives to sound more brave about the future than they. Always as they approach the golden gates of power, they behave exactly as Social Democrats in Germany behaved. There are men amongst them; some of them stir and speak as if to test the response of their fellow men. They must hasten if they are to catch anyone's attention; leadership is passing into other hands.

We have a second chance? In 1919 the men of vision in the parties of progress split and wrangled while the forces of reaction quietly reoccupied the positions they held so precariously during the war. The intelligent tactics at the moment do not seem to us to lie in attempting any purely party revival. The millions in the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, the Civil Defence, in the factories and workshops and on the land care very little about party labels and will care still less if they see on the Left only a fight between different Labour, Communist and Liberal factions. But they do care, and care desperately about the ideas and the programmes of change that are supposed to inspire these party struggles. They understand, for instance, when they hear that it is even now not officially laid down that the land in our blitzed cities is public property to plan and rebuild for the benefit of the community. They understand very clearly, the issues of the Beveridge Report. They know what is meant by "freedom from want." Mr. Bevin showed that he is in touch with the workers when he said that his war aim was "social security." By withdrawing the A.B.C.A. pamphlet, Sir James Grigg has given the show away to many who would not have believed, without ocular demonstration, that the Tory Party meant to sabotage the one popular measure officially advocated during the war. We should be inclined to say to those who in Britain ask for practical advice today; "Choose a single issue. "Make a nation-wide issue of the Beveridge Report; explain that in these questions of family allowances and public insurance we have before us an unchallengeable test of the honesty of our rulers when they promised a change in the old social order and declared for freedom from want. Remember the technique of the anti-Corn Law movement, which swept through England a century ago. Bright and Cobden did more than abolish the Corn Laws; they transformed the Whig party and gave us Liberalism. So to-day an agitation, conducted with public meetings, by canvass, by pamphlets, by constant pressure of every sort throughout the country, could bring for us not the few sops from the Beveridge Report, with which the Conservatives would like to buy off the public, but the whole Report. It would involve a change which, still far from Socialism, would be the beginning of a new social order in Britain. If the Beveridge Report is carried by popular will during the war there will be at the end of the war an active and lively progressive movement in this country. It will contain many who are now Conservatives, Liberals, Labour men, Communists and I.L.P.'ers. Many of them will have forgotten what they once called themselves, because they will have been working with other like-minded people on a particular job." That, we suggest, both in the United States and Britain is a sensible technique to apply to the problem of organising resistance to the forces of reaction which threaten again to betray the aspirations of a generation.

WHAT ROME BUILT

THE swift march is over. The Eighth Army has made an end of the Fascist Empire in Africa. At Tripoli, under the towering walls of the old Spanish castle, the statue of the Duce still postures on its horse with uplifted sword, protecting Islam, while Montgomery's men march past him, joking ironically in Cockney and Maori, broad Scots and Lancashire. But that sculptured boast is almost the only vulgar thing in the little city which Marshal Balbo built with a good taste as remarkable as his energy. The modern functional architecture of the streets that converged on this place was as graceful as it was simple, and their white walls matched the climate like an Arab's robes. The restoration of the old castle that remembered the most spectacular of Charles V's exploits had been carried out with skill and restraint. Inside it, the Marshal's passion for antiquity had covered the walls with some astonishingly vivid Roman mosaics. Everything spoke of the pride and ambition which found their satisfaction in this empire the new Italy was creating out of sand.

And now what will happen to it? It meant several things, not all of them evil. Over it hung, indeed, the memories first of a conquest and then of a re-conquest under Graziani that rank among the cruellest chapters in the annals of imperialism. The exiles who fled to Egypt and Tunisia cherish in hatred their memories of the wells he sealed, the gallows he erected and the flocks he deliberately destroyed. That tarred road along the coast over which Rommel advanced and retired so often —what is it but a monument of military megalomania that began in insolence and ended in shame?

But there is something better to be said about this Italian colony. From a rather hurried visit to it, early in 1939, I came away with some respect for its daring and competence. Civilian courage Italian engineers possess, and it is a rarer and more valuable quality than any military virtue. It wanted intelligence to realise that this desert could be tamed: it argued audacity as well as patience that the thing was done. The drifting sand-dunes through which the coast road passed looked at a first glance as hopeless as they were menacing. Under that sand lay buried the wealth and art of three civilisations. I had seen the great city of Leptis Magna, first Punic, then Roman, and finally Byzantine, which Italian spades have recently uncovered. Its vast dimensions, its spacious forum, its luxurious baths, its profusion of statuary, its gracious basilica meant that it must have been the centre of a populous and opulent region. "What was shall be again" was Balbo's motto, and he had set his engineers and foresters to work. They were doing it as I drove over that now famous road. The first step is to fix the drifting sand with trees and shrubs. Eucalyptus and wattle with great care will grow, but shelters must be built around the seedling plants with meticulous care. The only other requisite is water. It is there, but it lies deep below the sand. I saw one artesian well that was said to be about a quarter of a mile deep. Out of it gushed in almost embarrassing plenty water enough to irrigate all the lands of a great village. It was tepid and tasted of sulphur, but plant life throve upon it.

Balbo adapted for his colonies the technique of mass-production. Everything was ready when the settlers arrived. The well had been sunk and the land ploughed up with tractors. Cottages had been built of an identical design, roomy, well fitted, simple, dignified and well proportioned. Mass-produced furniture was ready, also of a good design. The social centre of each settlement was a most pleasing essay in this new colonial architecture, with its church, school, café, inn, hall, co-operative store and dwellings for priest, teacher and doctor, conceived as one harmonious structure. The settlers were all peasants and preference was given to large families. I saw three of these settlements between Homs and Misurata, in various stages of maturity. Their crops were thriving; their young fruit trees promised well. So far as I could judge they were cheerful and content. I had been reading *Fontamara* shortly before I landed in Tripoli: assuredly this was better than the misery Silone describes. These colonists, as they showed me their first harvests and their livestock, were hopeful. But this was a Fascist colony. There was no vestige of self-government. Everything was regulated—so far as I could judge with intelligence. For individuality there was no scope at all. I met the uniformed supervising official. He carried a whip. I did not like the gestures he made with it.

The plan was to settle 20,000 colonists every year. Each family cost the State-aided Corporation on an average £1,500. Of this the State gave one-third. The colonist, after a first free period, was to reimburse the rest in twenty years.

A good deal was being done for the natives, if I may believe a little—not too much—of the official propaganda. For them, too, there were some settlements on a similar plan. I did verify the claim that something had been done for public health and cattle-breeding. My impression, however, was of abject poverty, rags and malnutrition —which is equally true of French Tunisia. But I had no chance here, as I had in the relative freedom of Tunisia, to talk with the Arabs. Balbo had as few scruples as any Fascist hero, but he was, none the less, a creative and good-natured type, who wished to be popular with the natives.

What do the United Nations propose to do with this desert, which had just begun to flourish on its fringes? The natives have their rights and their claims. But after Turkish neglect and Italian regimentation, is there among them any

nucleus of leadership, which after a time and with some help could run the country in a civilised way? The Senoussi may be in some degree an exception, but they could hardly take over the whole country. But equally, on the score of hard work brilliantly conceived, Italians also have some claim. Their engineers and agricultural experts have wrought miracles. Their peasants are, perhaps, the only Europeans who could thrive in this climate. On the most hopeful view Libya could receive only a negligible fraction of Italy's surplus population. But even Tripolitania can be made habitable again, while green Cyrenaica with its happier climate presents a much easier problem. The difficulty is to find a State, a people or an organisation which will provide the necessary capital. Mussolini did it first of all from vanity and then for aggression; this was the road to Egypt. Is there no one in these days who will undertake creative work from an innocent motive? To me it would seem to argue a lack of ambition in our civilisation, if we let these colonies go back to sand.

The suggestion has been made that Libya might furnish a refuge for the Jews. Certainly they could succeed here, if they brought to the task the talent they have displayed in Palestine. But do they want to find themselves for the second time in conflict with Arabs? And would they give to a land which has for them no romantic appeal, what they have given to Zion? These are questions for them to answer. Their sufferings have given them a right to ask for opportunities at least as good as this.

If we succeed after this war in erecting an international authority capable of creative work, might it consider North Africa as a single problem? Here is a vast territory that once was Rome's granary. Centuries of barbarism ruined it. To-day it is our militarism which eats up the resources that might reclaim it. Mr. G. L. Steer, in *A Date in the Desert* (p. 245), has drawn from Mommsen the startling discovery that the Romans kept the peace of Africa, all the way from the Atlantic to the borders of Egypt, with a single legion, 12,000 strong, together with 15,000 native auxiliaries: 27,000 men all told. When he wrote, in 1939, Mr. Steer reckoned that in this territory Spain, France and Italy maintained 270,000 troops. The Romans, moreover, had no costly mechanical weapons to provide. With a tenth of the men they defended at least ten times the wealth that exists to-day.

If we could cut these garrisons to the Roman level or below it, we should not lack the means to fight soil erosion, sink artesian wells, plant trees and restore the fertility which made even of a little third-rate Roman town like Dougga, where the First Army is fighting to-day, a centre of culture and opulence. I used to wonder, when I went about in the squalor of the Tunisian villages, whether Tennessee Valley methods will ever be used here to restore the eroded soil. But without political unity the thing cannot be done. These rival Powers are spending on bombers and tanks what should go into wells and terraces. The future is too dim as yet for detailed plans. I will not speculate on the forms of mandate and control which the single International Authority might use to assign their part in the common task to one State or another, nor how precisely it would reconcile native interests with those of French, Italian and possibly Jewish settlers. Enough that as a problem in politics, economics and engineering it must be conceived as a single whole. Mussolini's shoddy empire is ended; but is it beyond us, in a co-operative effort, with all our science, to restore what Rome built?

H. N. BRAILSFORD.

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FREEDOM AND EXECUTIVE JUSTICE

[FROM A LEGAL CORRESPONDENT]

IT was good to see the High Court speak with emphasis upon the right of a detained person to have access to its protection; in the absence of that right the elementary foundations of civil freedom would be stricken into impotence. We have, even though reluctantly, agreed to the imposition of certain safeguards against a threat to public safety in these years of emergency, above all in that realm where, in the nature of the case, the suspicions aroused cannot be tested by those canons of evidence a court of law must apply. But it was never the intention of Parliament, and it would certainly never meet with the approval of public opinion, that the Home Secretary should be the final judge of the limits of the powers conferred upon him. In permitting specified invasions of the rule of law, Parliament did not give the Home Secretary a licence for its general suspension.

It was, therefore, only fitting that Mr. Morrison should apologise to the Court for the over-zealous indiscretion of one of his officials. The latter, it appears, withheld an application to the Court from one of the persons detained under 18b, and it was only the pertinacity of the person which broke through the obstacles which had been placed in his way. The Court laid it down with great firmness that any detained person may make an application for rights of which he believes himself to be illegally deprived, and it is for the judiciary and not the executive to decide upon the legality of the application. This is elementary common sense, and Mr. Morrison (who was, of course, unaware of his official's excessive zeal) had no alternative but to apologise. One does not feel quite so easy at the refusal (under the sacred cloak of ministerial responsibility) to give the name of the offender. Goodwill, no doubt, is a merit, and one does not need to be convinced of this official's goodwill. But there is a realm in which goodwill is no substitute for a denial of legal right, and the field of personal liberty is, above all others, such a realm. We should like to hear Mr. Morrison explain in the House of Commons that he has given quite precise instructions to damp down this type of zeal in the future.

Executive justice in time of war is an inescapable necessity; let us yet never cease to affirm that it is a process which can never be too carefully watched, above all by those who administer it. The danger is always real that officials who are responsible for its administration begin, after a time, to think of the discretion they exercise less as a flexible rule to be applied to a changing situation than as a fixed principle which does not need the refreshment of constant re-examination. And this is more likely to be the case when, as with the cases under 18b and the internment of aliens, the discretion of the Home Secretary is, within its given area, an absolute one, and the grounds upon which he forms his view are beyond the power of public scrutiny. A wise Home Secretary would always remember that, vital as is his obligation to the security of the State, it is not less vital that he maintain a sense of proportion and communicate to his officials the mood in which they are continuously on guard against the conviction of their infallibility. The profoundest goodwill is no sufficient safeguard against the subtle poison of power.

The recent case in the High Court was one for which Mr. Morrison's responsibility was only nominal, for the official's conduct which was rebuked by the Court occurred under the regime of Sir John Anderson. And it is only right to say that, in the exercise of these powers, Mr. Morrison has effected very great improvements in the habits of his department compared with those under his predecessor. More, it can fairly be said that, though he has been, as the times demand, a firm Home Secretary, he has been, in a high degree, patient with inquiries and anxious to make it clear that he will consider each case afresh where new facts seem to warrant a further scrutiny.

Yet, despite all this, it is not easy to avoid the suspicion that a certain rigidity is entering into the Home Office administration of this field. To prove its reality is difficult, especially when the facts are secret; yet the suspicion persists. It is particularly the case where enemy aliens of the refugee class are concerned. Persons who fall outside Mr. Morrison's original categories scheduled for possible release have now been interned over two years even though no one suspects them of being dangerous. Other persons have been re-interned, sometimes for as long as seven or eight months, without being told what led to the decision, still less being given a chance to rebut the charges which may have led to it. No re-examination appears to have been made of the decision which confined enlistment of anti-Nazi* Germans or anti-Fascist Italians to the Pioneer Corps, and where aliens have been freed under conditions their relaxation, even where there is long evidence of immaculate behaviour, is extraordinarily rare. The local police still possess controls which they can (and do) impose with futile rigidity.

No doubt the alien is subject to the prerogative power, and, no doubt, also, wherever there is suspicion either of his loyalty or proof of anti-social conduct, his internment is beyond objection. But the basis upon which the present policy is built seems to be that any alien of enemy nationality shall be interned unless there is sufficient reason for his release. "Sufficient reason" seems to be interpreted in terms of the categories established over two years ago, and too many of those who could not then profit from the freedom they made possible still languish in confinement. There are, too, still people who were sent to Canada or Australia for internment whose claims have not been re-examined since their original detention. Is it not time, in the light of all that has occurred, for the Home Office to think out afresh the basis of its policy?

It is easy to say that Mr. Morrison is a hard-worked Minister with an immense responsibility on his shoulders; it is too much to expect that he should give the time to these matters that he needs for more vital things. It is easy, also, to argue that the issue can always be raised in Parliament. The trouble about Parliament, in this context, is the simple one that it must either accept Mr. Morrison's assurance that all is well, or get a new Home Secretary. It cannot probe into public liberty as it probes into national expenditure. Nor is the argument about time impressive. No time is ever wasted which strengthens the boundaries of personal freedom. Legally, freedom for the refugee may be an act of grace, but it is a good thing for the nation to insist upon magnanimity to the stranger within its gate. For those who begin by forgetting their refugees pass insensibility to forgetfulness of their own citizens. We can never emphasise often enough that government exists for the sake of the governed.

We have set this issue of an over-rigid administration in the context of the alien refugee; it may well have a wider application. We should like a man of the competence and balance of Mr. Justice Birkett set the task by the Home Secretary of going afresh through the internments under 18b and advising him of those where, as he thinks, Mr. Morrison might make a fresh appraisal of his decision. It is good for officials and for the public that all internees should have their cases periodically reviewed. It is of great importance that no official under Mr. Morrison's control should get into that frame of mind which the High Court so rightly stigmatised last week. And the way to prevent its development lies in the kind of re-examination which recognises the difference between 1940 and 1943. Mr. Morrison could take no step more likely to maintain the respect he has won for the general quality of his administration than by recognising that a flexible administration is a safeguard against injustice.

A LONDON DIARY

WHY Peyrouton? As if there weren't enough Fascists in North Africa without importing them from Buenos Aires. I have just been looking through a dossier of his career. He was a master of Fascist intrigue from 1933, when he first became Resident General in Tunis, until 1936, when he went as Ambassador to Buenos Aires. When he knew he would lose his job under the Front Populaire, he set out to buy the favour of trusts and big business, so that he would be wanted again when the wheel shifted once more. In Africa he earned a reputation for peculiar brutality to Arabs. As Minister of the Interior at Vichy he set up concentration camps for anti-Fascists, and it was he who imprisoned Mandel, Blum and Daladier. He was active in introducing the anti-Semitic laws, and he is computed to have imprisoned 15,000 people without trial. In November, 1940, he said: "We must accept a policy of collaboration with Germany. It is the only one which can ensure the revival of our country." He boasted to the German press because "he was the first Frenchman to introduce National Socialist methods in North Africa" and because he had put an end to "Jewish and Masonic influences." His political police was openly modelled on the Gestapo. He said: "My enemies accuse me of being a Hitlerian; I am proud of it." Why appoint such a twisting tape-worm of a man? Dare anyone talk now of military expediency? It seems time for a bit of old-fashioned principle. The excuse, I imagine, is that he is supposed to be against Laval. Might as well make peace with Göring, because he is said to be jealous of Hitler. The case for military expediency would be stronger.

* * *

Mr. Eden has left to another time, perhaps to another Foreign Secretary, the main job of reforming and democratising the Foreign Office. This White Paper merely carries out a few desirable and minor changes. A diplomat—would you believe it—who used to be irremovable until he was pensioned off at sixty, can now get the sack at forty if he is sufficiently incompetent. One thinks, with misgiving, of the damage done by past diplomats and one wonders how many of the obviously disastrous ones would have been considered incompetent at forty? Still it is good that diplomats should cease to be, by nature, sacrosanct. More important is the change by which at length there is to be a Foreign Service and no longer an old-school-tie diplomatic service entitled to treat the commercial diplomatic and consular services as poor relations. To-day Consuls in the United States, for instance, are frequently most important officials, the centre of British information, far more closely in touch with the public than the important persons who draw much higher salaries and live on a hill far from the sordid struggles of American life. This change is a step towards the recognition of the value of the Consulate and Commercial Diplomatic Services; that is valuable. In time it will be discovered that the Foreign Service is to-day mainly a job of public relations, and that the old job of confidential negotiations between State and State, requiring the right accent, is no longer important. The big stuff nowadays gets fixed up direct between the Churchills, Roosevelts, Stalins and Chiang Kai-sheks.

* * *

I see that Louis Adamic spoke on the Jugoslav situation to newspaper correspondents in Washington. Adamic speaks with authority; he is himself, I believe, a Croat in origin and he has specialised on the problems of eastern and central European emigrants to America. He is right, I think, in comparing the divisions in Jugoslavia to those in Spain during the civil war, and he is certainly right in urging that Britain, America and Russia must reach a "United Nations" agreement. Otherwise when the time comes to invade Europe they will find themselves backing different groups and "killing the very people they intend to liberate." Official remarks about inevitable friction and so forth would cover a good deal, but not the actual conditions of civil war. Adamic suggests an Anglo-Russo-American military mission to Jugoslavia—a good idea, since soldiers who arrived in an occupied country would have to make up their minds on the realities of the military situation, not according to the same ideologies of State Departments.

* * *

John Burns, who died this week in his eighty-third year, had been out of politics for nearly thirty years—since he resigned from the Liberal Cabinet in 1914 with John Morley on the outbreak of the last war. Many wondered after 1918 whether he would come back; but he made no attempt to intervene in politics. With Keir Hardie he had been the outstanding figure in the working-class movement of the 'nineties, and had travelled, *via* Radicalism, to a Cabinet post in Campbell-Bannerman's Government of 1905. Yet he could never come to terms with the Labour Party. He had been one of the leaders of the Social Democratic Federation and he had made his name in the great Dock Strike of 1889, but he was really more a Radical than a Socialist, and much more of a Radical than most of the trade union leaders who joined with the Socialists in creating the Labour Party. He was at loggerheads with the new party from the first; and as President of the Local Government Board under the Liberals he had many tussles with the Labour men over the working of the Poor Law and the treatment of the unemployed. Controversy became more acute after the Royal Commission on the Poor Law had reported; Burns would have nothing to do with the Webb's famous Ministry Report. His principal achievement at the Local Government Board was the Housing and Town Planning Act of 1909. That was the beginning of town planning legislation. But he had a bad department, and made no mark as an administrator. In 1914 he went to the Board of Trade. In public life Burns was a very rousing orator, with a great command over working-class audiences; in private he was an ardent collector of books, especially about the history of London, which was his chief hobby, and about the Labour movement. He was the most regular denizen of the National Liberal Club, and an excellent, if egoistic, talker. The generation of to-day has largely forgotten him; but for many years there was hardly a more famous man in England.

* * *

S. K. Ratcliffe, who has an excellent memory for such things, sends me some interesting details about Bernard Shaw's relations with Clifford Sharp in the early days of the NEW STATESMAN in 1913. A good deal had been said in the publicity for the *N.S.* about the large part that G.B.S. intended to play in forming its policy. Ratcliffe writes:

> A few days before No 1 Sharp told me that G.B.S. had knocked him over by saying that he "would not sign"—meaning, of course, that he was looking forward to writing leaders. Sharp, however, was rather bucked by getting an article on Forcible Feeding that he regarded as a masterpiece. He began editing G.B.S. (he was an incorrigible alterer) and showed me the MS. of an article the next week, I think, rigorously subbed right through. When I exclaimed about this treatment, he said, "Shaw says he likes it." I said, "Of course, you know he won't stand *that*."

It was this question of signing articles, not any question of a particular article, that led to Shaw's ceasing to write regularly for the *N.S.* Ratcliffe goes on to say that Sharp "hated" Shaw's *Common Sense About the War*, but it got quotations for the new *N.S.* all over the world, and as a journalist Sharp naturally admired it. Later, according to Ratcliffe, G.B.S. wanted to make a further attack on Edward Grey in a second supplement; Sharp refused, and G.B.S. said to Ratcliffe, "I told him he has become a suburban Tory." But Shaw always continued to have a high opinion of Sharp as an editor. The truth is, of course, that no editor could have stood the kicks that would come to him for publishing *unsigned* G.B.S. The more brilliant and the more personal the articles the more impossible for the editor to print them.

* * *

Philately reveals the collecting impulse in its purest form, for most stamps, at any rate most modern stamps, have little or no aesthetic value. But I have just seen two sets of stamps that are as good to look at as any of the finest issues of the past. It is a promise of better times to see a charming and characteristic issue of the stamps of free Norway. The second set, designed by Edmund Dulac for the Fighting French colonies, are of signal excellence. The artist has in each case adopted a motive appropriate to the region, whether it is a pattern characteristic of native art, or a symbol of activity, such as the sailing-ship with compass and ropes that represents St. Pierre et Miquelon. The Free French bank-notes designed by the same artist are equally pleasing, for he has shown great ingenuity in fulfilling the conditions necessary to obviate forgery. (A blank space, for instance, has to be left for the watermark.) The 1,000 franc note is specially felicitous: on one side a phoenix is reborn between sheaves of wheat, olive and oak; on the other we see the devastation caused by war to a cottage and a tree contrasted with the cottage rebuilt and the tree putting out new leaves. Is it too much to hope that our own stamps and bank-notes may be raised to the same standard of excellence?

* * *

Elizabeth Pakenham offers this neat retort to the gentleman who last week explained the Beveridge Report as an effort to prevent Mr. Everyman snatching "from ruddy hell, an ell." She replies:

> The Beveridge Report,
> I retort,
> In giving us an inch, makes it less hard
> To take a yard.
> Them's my sentiments too. CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to F. G. Drake.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

The Brains Trust of the City of Leeds Women's Conservative Association, meeting yesterday in the Leeds and County Conservative Club, decided that girls ought not to be allowed to go to school in slacks as it made them conspicuous and arrested their physical development.—*Yorkshire Post.*

Pasteurising or boiling, or both, have nothing whatever to do with cleanliness. If you boil dirty or microbe-ridden milk you get boiled filth and the corpses of the microbes, but they are still in the milk. I can conceive of a dead microbe being more dangerous than a live one. I certainly prefer to drink mine alive. They have been swimming in every drop of the thousands of gallons I have consumed and have never done me any harm. —Letter in *Manchester Guardian.*

I am in full agreement with Commander Campbell. What the listening public requires is amusement and common sense. Please leave out religion and politics.—Letter in *News Chronicle.*

Bronte Finance Co., 31 Mill Hey, Haworth, loans with or without security.—Advertisement in the *Keighley News.*

A news agency report published in Tuesday's *Daily Express* stated that Mr. Fred Moir, of Camberwell, was injured by enemy action when he went to the door of his home to put out his cat. We are now informed that it was untrue that Mr. Moir was putting the cat out during an air raid, and that he was wounded while cycling home from work. We regret any annoyance.—*Daily Express.*

WILL WE LOSE THE PEACE AGAIN ?

[This article, by one of the most forcible of the younger generation of American thinkers, appeared in *New Republic*, November 30th, 1942.]

AT last the tide has turned for the United Nations. It leads to our victory, and from now on we must ask with greater insistence : What do we mean by victory ? Will it mean a new advance toward world unity or will it come to be seen as a second great betrayal ? More than ever, now we need to remember what R. H. Tawney said : " The destruction by the effort to achieve victory of the moral principles which alone can justify a war, is the commonest lesson of history . . ."

Too often we make action a substitute for thought. If we think now, we must realise that there is the greatest danger that this war, which began in the manner of 1914, which developed through a war of resistance until it has come within reach of being a war of liberation, will revert before its conclusion to the pattern of 1919. Then all that we have done may be for nothing. In whose mind now is not the remembrance of 1919 like a dry wind stirring up uneasy fear ?

We must, of course, fight this war with all our strength and will. We must also ask : What are the essential differences between 1917 and 1943 that are sources of hope now ?

There is the participation of Soviet Russia in the war. But Russia, as this series of articles has argued, is isolated from our war effort . . .

There is the participation of the oppressed peoples in the war . . .

There is the strength of the liberal spirit in Britain and America, greater to-day than was the strength of the New Freedom and the progressive movement of Lloyd George. But it is so much stronger ? The elections have demonstrated how tenuous is the hold of liberalism in America on power.

There are our declared war aims, supposedly far beyond the war aims of 1917. But are they ? Where, in the Atlantic Charter, or the master lease-lend agreements, or the speeches of our leaders, is there anything to compare with the words of Woodrow Wilson before the first plenary session of the Congress when he said :

" We are here to see . . . that the very foundations of this war are swept away. Those foundations were the private choice of small coteries of civil rulers and their military staffs. Those foundations were the holding together of legions of unwilling subjects by the duress of arms. Those foundations were the power of small bodies of men to work their will upon mankind and use them as pawns in a game. And nothing less than the emancipation of the world from these things will accomplish peace."

We have one great source of strength—our wartime achievements in mobilising our democracies, and in creating the machinery of world organisation in the joint boards of the United Nations. Our democracies remain divided, the joint boards remain only Anglo-American boards ; yet these are important advances. There is a growing recognition that we cannot allow our nations to sink back to unemployment and economic collapse or disband the joint-board machinery when the war ends.

That recognition is our source of strength ; but it existed also in 1917.

Both in Britain and in America, government had come to play, by 1917, the same powerful role in mobilising our peoples that it is playing to-day. In both countries, liberals saw in this role of government the outlines of the future democratic society.

" The national government," wrote the editors of *The New Republic* in 1917, " has recently assumed control of the railroads as an apparently indispensable condition of operating them with the utmost efficiency. . . . The nationalisation of the railroads has been preceded by the nationalisation of ocean shipping and of the distribution of food by a comprehensive system of price fixing. . . . Every one of these emergency measures was adopted to meet evils in the old system to which the radical writers had long called attention in vain and which the war had rendered intolerable." The New Republic urged that these functions of government continue.

In England, in 1917, the Labour Party, under the superb intellectual leadership of Sidney Webb, published, in *Labour and the New Social Order*, a programme for the maintenance of a fully mobilised democratic society far clearer and more systematic than anything that this war has produced. The democratic society which the Labour Party put 300 men into the elections of 1919 to fight for was based on four pillars : " The National Minimum," which provided for full employment under minimum standards for all citizens ; " Revolution in National Finance," which proposed progressive taxation ; " The Surplus for the Common Good," an ambitious programme of education ; and " The Democratic Regulation of Industry," which called for the full maintenance, in peacetime, of the wartime functions of government in operating industry and controlling prices. When, on the basis of this programme, Ben Tillett won an all-important by-election at North Salford in November, 1917, Webb wrote, in THE NEW STATESMAN, one of the most moving documents of the war, " The Vision of North Salford " :

" The old politics are dead. Not the workmen only, but also the great mixed membership of the industrial co-operative societies and a considerable section of the shopkeeping and professional classes with a sprinkling of manufacturing employers, not to speak of the young men from the universities who are now in khaki, have lost faith in any more ' reconstruction ' of the England of 1913-14. The demand is for a new social order."

Mr. Webb then went on to describe in practical terms the changes demanded by the new order. He dealt with the National Minimum, with employment, rest, sanitation, education, standards of living, and with the necessity of reorganising power (that is, railways, electricity, coal, etc.) and shipping as State industries.*

Nothing written in the last three years in Britain or America can compare with Webb's " Vision," which was not an intellectual exercise but the fighting platform of a political party within reach of power.

In the same way, by 1918, the inter-Allied machinery for the prosecution of the war represented a working system of world control. . . . Again, liberals understood the promise of this system. " The moral basis of the League of Nations has been laid in necessity," wrote the editors of the *New Republic*, who gathered around Colonel House to prepare the first draft of the Covenant. " The military unity of to-day argues irresistibly for the political unity of the future." In England, the Fabian Society and the Labour Party drew up detailed plans for the working of a league that would arise from the inter-Allied machinery. Webb wrote :

" The whole of the communications of the vast areas under control of the alliance is gradually being brought completely under state control, and is then used not for the use of this state or that state, but to supply the needs of the alliance. In the same way the commodities of the alliance have been internationalised and it is hardly an exaggeration to say that the whole output of the world's staple food products and metals is taken up into the hands of this world state and distributed as occasion requires to such part of it —Britain, for instance, or France, or Italy, which for economic and industrial purposes are federal divisions. Here then is a league of nations with a system of international government so advanced and so highly organised that not even the most optimistic internationalist would, three years ago, have imagined it practicable this side of the millennium. With this federation of the world before his eyes no one will be able to say again that international agreements are useless, that international co-operation is impossible or that international government is a chimera. The only question remaining is whether man is so ferocious an animal that he will build up this enormous system of international co-operation for the purpose of war and will refuse to allow his rulers to refuse to employ it for the purposes of peace."

But while the liberals explained the logistics of progress, conservatives acted upon the logistics of power. As Bryan and the followers of the New Freedom passed out of Wilson's Cabinet, the industrialists moved in. As the liberals left Lloyd George, representatives of British heavy industry, such as Sir Auckland Geddes and Sir Robert Horne, took up strategic posts in the government for the coming struggle. The French Government passed from the coalition of Viviani to the conservative Cabinet of Painlevé and Clemenceau. The scenes were shifted for the last act.

As the war drew to a close the fight to maintain the wartime controls reached a climax. In America the Railway Brotherhoods demanded the continued government operation of the railroads. The Postmaster General, A. J. Burleson, attempted to convert his temporary control of all communications into a permanent system. In the *New Republic*, Norman Hapgood proposed a great programme of government ownership and public works. But the industrialists and Congress tore the government controls apart and actually deprived the government of powers which it held before the war.

In Britain the struggle to maintain the wartime controls almost resulted in civil war. The railwaymen struck within a few months of the Armistice, to obtain the nationalisation that had been promised to them. Lloyd George fought back, calling the strike an " anarchist conspiracy." The coal miners threatened a general strike to enforce the nationalisation of coal. The Conservatives replied by organising a " Civic Guard " and springing a snap election. . . .

The most vigorous of the government executives, Winston Churchill, supported the maintenance of government controls. Churchill said :

" I have not been quite convinced by my experience at the Ministry of Munitions that socialism is possible, but I have been very nearly convinced. I am bound to say that I consider on the whole the achievements of the Ministry of Munitions constitute the greatest argument for state socialism that has ever been produced."

But British heavy industry disagreed. On February 27th, 1919, Sir Robert Horne told the National Industrial Conference that the government factories would be given back to industry in order to restore confidence to private enterprise " and assure that its suspicions would not be aroused."

In March the shipping and food controls were released and the ships and shipyards sold to private hands. The yards had been held back in production until they could be returned, in order that competition might be lessened. Then all the factories, the tools and equipment that the government possessed were sold. In the government the civil servants raged helplessly. The ablest of these, Sir Leo Chiozza Money, secretary of the Board of Shipping, left the government and joined the Labour Party, where he fumed in its press :

" I can hardly trust myself to write in moderate terms of the impudent action of the Coalition Government in abandoning for sale the national factories and national plants which, erected and acquired by the nation in deference to the opposition of the capitalists, are now to be sold out to private controllers and profiteers."

" The Ministry of Munitions factories were the most up to date, the most go-ahead and the most economical in the land. From shells to sulphuric acid, from guns to cordite, they beat private enterprise hollow. So it would be in peace, and profiteers know it well. That is why a coalition backed by profiteers sells out the means of producing cheaply and employing well. It is for the great trade unions to make up their minds whether they will interfere or not . . . Let them

*We have been obliged, for space reasons, to omit some sentences to summarise quotations given at length in Mr. Straight's article.—Ed. *N.S. & N.*

pass resolutions . . . Let them agitate . . . Let them hold public meetings. . . . It is the whole future of labour which is being compromised in this matter! We have the chance now to start national industry, in splendid national factories, and to put these factories under democratic control, by an association of trade unions with trade experts and the Minister of Supply."

But shipping was highly profitable in the inflation of 1919. From Cardiff, an anonymous shipowner wrote to Money: "If the government does not take you in hand at once, I will make it my business to either bomb you or shoot you myself before you are allowed to drag the country into bloodshed."

The attack of reaction upon wartime socialism was made easier because of the preoccupation of liberals with the peace settlement. But that fight was also lost. Fear of domestic revolution led the Allied leaders to incite their peoples, as a means of diversion, with the most extreme chauvinist slogans. Consequently, the hope of a constructive peace settlement was destroyed. Meanwhile, the international controls created by the war were also broken. First, American reaction, led by Herbert Hoover, smashed the machinery of economic collaboration which the Allies had constructed. Then reaction in America and Europe joined to attack the political machinery of the League and cripple it.

So the promises of the war faded in violence and bloodshed. Revolution flared up in Europe; American food and Allied money suppressed it.

Miraculously, we have been given a second chance. We are failing to take it.

Far too often in government circles there is an attitude of complacency which asserts that this time there will be no destruction of the machinery of national or world mobilisation: the problems of reconversion and relief will be so immense—these men say—that only through the wartime machinery can they be met. Of course they will be immense: they were immense in 1918. To-day the American people have not begun to assess, let alone to value, this machinery. Many of the industrialists who control a great part of the machinery are convinced that it must be scrapped after the armistice. Certainly this is a dominant attitude of the War Department; certainly it is shared by Congress and by conservatives throughout America.

Also there are far too many men who say: This time America is bound to recognise her responsibilities to the world. Nothing of the sort is true.

In the last war, the concept of the League of Nations was put before the American people in 1915 by the League to Enforce Peace. By 1917 it was endorsed by thirty-four out of thirty-six legislatures. Yet three years later popular support of the League was unable to prevent its being cut to pieces in the Senate.

The struggle against the League was a struggle for power, by reaction. It believed that if the League were adopted, liberalism would be perpetuated in America. To-day, unless the President is extraordinarily skilful, it is inevitable that his attempts to lead America into a permanent organisation of the United Nations will be met by the same opposition, fearing that if the United Nations—the President's creation—should succeed, then the New Deal in America will be given a new hold upon power. Yet, with this fight in front of us, and perhaps only a year or two to go, there is no leadership in America which is carrying the concept of the United Nations, and the real problems of America's participation in world construction, to our people. American reaction is laying its lines for this struggle. We are doing nothing.

When the full force of reaction broke over the world in 1920, the shock, to liberals who had sustained the fighting spirit of the soldier by the fire of their purpose, was inexpressibly deep. The editors of THE NEW STATESMAN wrote:

"At the present moment we are living amid the ruins of a world of promises—ruins disastrous beyond any that were ever produced by earthquake or any natural catastrophe. . . . It seems like something happening in a far-off world when the democracies went to war merely because a great nation had broken a pledge."

"Never had the world been shaken by such a rage of public virtue. Even sclerotic party politicians began to go about with the air of prophets booming against Tyre and Sidon. If we had never been virtuous before, we were virtuous now. We annexed heaven itself and stood on the pillars of the glittering gates, blowing trumpets that only angels are supposed to blow. . . . Had you, spirit of Schopenhauer, but returned to our earth in those happy days you would have thrown away your pessimism as a poor man who has come into a fortune throws away a pair of trousers with a hole in them. . . . We professed a code of morals which must be as strict as any that is known beyond the stars. We said that lying was unthinkable, that the domination of the strong over the weak was unthinkable. And we certainly promised a new world as soon as we could get rid of the incubus of Prussian militarism."

"Had the youth of the country and the workers been pawnbrokers in spirit they might have asked statesmen for pledges more substantial and less apt to disappear than winged words. They inclined to poetry, however, and found it easier to believe than to disbelieve. They did not realise that in these prodigious matters an ordinary statesman could not keep his word without losing himself. He is what his past has made him—a man who regards it as his job not to create a new world, but, with the help of glue and sticky plaster and pieces of string to keep the old world from falling to pieces. . . . We held up an absolute standard of virtue. And we answered that no nation could depart from it on any excuse without branding itself with eternal infamy. But even the cynics did not dare to warn us that before the cock crowed thrice we should have Amritsar and Kasur, that bloody shambles of an unarmed mob . . . An Englishman would have said you lied if, during the war to save the weak from the strong you had foretold that awful story. . . . The world has been cheated of the justice it desired . . . we can expect little but a duel of bitterness and crime between the governors and the governed. After all we said too! . . . Spirit of Schopenhauer, rest content in your grave; it seems that you were right."

Unless we join now, in powerful action, that spirit may be right once more.

Washington. MICHAEL STRAIGHT

A LETTER

TWO of the never-failing pleasures of life are hearing from people and listening to people. The pleasure of hearing from people is slightly mitigated by the, I suppose, natural desire on the part of most correspondents to hear from one in return. Not to write a letter in answer to a letter is regarded by them as a piece of bad manners comparable to the behaviour of a man who listens to a five-minute monologue from a well-wisher on the telephone and puts back the receiver without having said a single word in reply. This is obviously a misinterpretation of the attitude of the non-letter writer. There are some people who enjoy writing letters, and other people are happier not answering them; and, as each of the parties is doing what it likes best, neither of them can claim superiority, on grounds of morals or courtesy, over the other. I, for example, happen to be a letter-reader, not a letter-writer, but that does not mean that I condemn the habit of letter-writing as it is indulged in by those who are addicted to it. On the contrary, I can enjoy reading almost any letter; and envy, instead of censuring, the energy of the correspondent who wrote it.

Looking through my pockets in search of a cheque the other day, I came on a number of letters that seemed to me to have been well worth writing. There was one in particular, a few weeks old—criticising a defence I had made of Englishmen in the matter of their respect for the intellect—which I thought fully justified a twopence-halfpenny stamp. Rather hastily, perhaps, I had written the sentence:

> Has there ever before been a nation in which even a University boat-race has become a national event, exciting almost as much interest as Derby Day or a Test Match?

To me in my innocence the popularity of the University Boat Race seemed to be evidence of an ineradicable veneration on the part of the English people for their oldest seats of learning. What other explanation can there be of the fact that a million English men, women and children will not turn out to see a boat-race rowed between any two crews of which all the members are not scholars in the tradition of William of Wykeham and Porson?

I did not perceive the flaw in this reasoning till a letter reached me in which a correspondent rather satirically remarked:

> So, to prove how brainy we are, Y.Y. cites as evidence the University Boat Race! I suppose, if a book-publishing house ran a football-team, and it acquired great prestige, Y.Y. would argue from this that the English were a very literary race.

As a matter of fact I should, had I not been led to reconsider the matter by the letter from which I have quoted. If I had seen 70,000 spectators shouting themselves hoarse at Twickenham as a Faber and Faber XV battled furiously with a Gollancz XV, or as the Macmillans fought the Heinemanns to a scoreless draw, I should have said to myself: "How English people do love books!" I have unfortunately little comprehension of logic, for, though I attended logic lectures for a year, the youth beside me always sat with a photograph of Marie Studholme in front of him, and by his not always mute admiration of her distracted my attention from Barbara, Celarent and major and minor premises. Therefore I still find it extremely difficult to perceive the flaw in one of my own arguments. Even after reading the comments of my critic, I can only half see that there is something wrong with my reasoning in believing that, if the Faber-and-Fabers and the Gollanczes drew large Rugby crowds to Twickenham, this would show that England was becoming literary.

I bow to my critic, however, who has a more logical mind than I; and I have no doubt that he is right in deriding my other "proof" of the intellectualism of the English people as I presented it in the sentence: "Is there any other country in which a school-tie has become such a world-wide symbol—until recently—of everything necessary to the perfection of human life." To me this argument for the Englishman's love of scholarship seemed, when I wrote it, unanswerable. My more logically minded critic, however, suggests that there is no foundation for my reasoning, and that the common devotion to the old school-tie has nothing to do with love of scholarship whatever. He writes:

> Really; on first reading the article, I had grave doubts at this point, as to whether or not it was supposed to be a satire. But no; the seriousness of the beginning is maintained throughout. Y.Y.'s remarks on the old school-tie suggest that he wears one himself, and talks only to other wearers. His language is as blindly self-praising as when a Chinese mandarin says: "We are the Celestial people; all others are devils!"
>
> Surely such extravagant claims were never before made for any one institution. This school-tie is the symbol not merely of intellect, but "of everything necessary to the perfection of human life"!
>
> Of course we are meant by that to infer that the free-masonry between the public-school class is one of intellect; whereas it does not need much reflection to decide that this bond is purely one of similar social caste and training.

Strange though it may seem to my critic, I had never thought of this last explanation of the passion for the old school-tie. Many years ago I used occasionally to meet an Old Carthusian in a public house and, though it may sound difficult to believe, he never even mentioned social caste. His talk, in fact, was scholarly, and full of Latin sentences. Every now and then he would say: *Nunc est bibendum;* and, as he shook hands at closing time, he would

observe, a little meaninglessly: *Cras ingens iterabimus aequor*. But never once during our years of acquaintance did he even hint a question about my social position or the school at which I had been more or less educated. He might occasionally make a reference to T. E. Page and his dazzling trousers, or evince a pardonable pride in having attended the same school as Max Beerbohm; but, on the whole, apart from his incursions into Latin, his talk was like anybody else's, though he took a special delight in repeating that memorable question from *The Wrong Box*: "Do you know what the Governor of South Carolina said to the Governor of North Carolina? 'It's a long time between drinks.'" Even this habit of quotation from a masterpiece might, I think, have justified one in describing him as an intellectual rather than as a man too conscious of his social caste.

Possibly, however, not all Old Carthusians are like my scholarly acquaintance. Some of them may have forgotten their Latin and their Stevenson. Others may have sunk into the snobbery which my critic has detected in so many wearers of the old school-tie. My only excuse for being wrong is that my field of observation has been limited and that I am not so acute an observer as I might be. Also that I use words loosely in a way that must offend anyone with a precise and logical mind.

I became especially aware of this failing, as I read further in my critic's letter:

> But Y.Y. is not quite finished with the boat-race. He returns to the subject with the assertion that we "respect a 'Double First' almost as much as a 'Blue.'"
>
> Almost! The champion of the intellectuals sets out to confound the foreigners; and hands them their own argument on a plate! Surely the only way to prove his case would be to assert that the "Blue" was held in respect, but that the highest veneration was reserved for the "Double First"?

There, I must admit, my critic is right. To establish the case for the Englishman's enthusiasm for the intellect, I ought to have said boldly that "the Blue was held in respect, but that the highest veneration was reserved for the Double First." But would this have been quite true? It would have been a powerful argument, but, even in defence of English intellectualism, I shrink from saying things of the truth of which I am uncertain. And I still doubt whether a Double First is as popular as a Blue. I have certainly never seen thirty or forty thousand people rising to their feet with their hats off and yelling in celebration of a Double First.

Hence, as one who always plays for safety, I think it may be better to take the reverence for the Blue rather than the veneration of the Double First as the eminent proof of the intellectual leanings of the English people.

Even so, I wilt slightly as I read and re-read my critic's closing sentence: "This champion of the intellectuals must not expect to be thanked by those whom he has undertaken to defend." Not that I expected to be thanked, for I have long known that this is an ungrateful world. At the same time, I feel that my defence of the intellect might have been made more convincing, and that I may have ever so slightly overestimated the significance of Twickenham and the Thames as the modern echoes and reflections of the Athens of Socrates.

Y.Y.

DISORDER OF THE DAY

All of you, men and women, without any exception must have but one thought—that this war decides whether our nation is to be or not to be.—*Hitler, November 8th*, 1942.

You will fight in the marshes of Poland,
You will fight on the great German plain,
You will fight in the forests of Russia,
You will fight on the hillsides of Spain,
You will fight in the streets and the airfields,
Our *Lebensraum* you will defend,
If our Frontiers are crossed, State and Party are lost
So you will hang on to the end.
The question is—to be or not to be?
For you as definitely as for me.
Your whole existence hangs upon this war,
So oder so! otherwise, either . . . or . . .
Either my military intuition
Secures your territorial ambition,
Seen in the greatest conquests of all time,
Or, felled by reptiles of the Russian slime,
Crushed in the pincers of the Allied drive,
No virile German will be left alive,
Ja Volksgenossen, you will not escape,
Chains, slavery, extortion, murder, rape.
Bolshevik hordes, despite annihilation,
Propose your national extermination,
For German, Austrian, worker, townsman, peasant,
Disaster will be equally unpleasant.
No need another "Fourteen Points" to wait,
The least of you will share your Leader's fate.
Either I win, or else, you may rely on it,
As you have made your bed, so you must die on it . . .
Eternal triumph, or complete shipwreck,
You are all in it, right up to the neck.
My vast, decisive stroke has been prepared,
Stalingrad's fall has been by me declared.
I give in war, whatever be its length,
My infinitely radiating strength,
I personally take upon my shoulders
The winter hardships of my million soldiers.
Our foes their *Teuselsplan* already make
Your manhood, my existence are at stake.
The home front is a battle theatre, too
Where all must toil and sweat—and this means you.
The faintest sign of night-life or complacence
I warn you will almost exhaust my patience.
Our ally Italy is on the spot,
She also asks—is she to be or not?
My infinite decisions now I voice,
You must fight on, because you have no choice.
And this is my intuitive conclusion
Either World Order or complete confusion!
You are myself, I you; it is for us,
To drive the juggernaut, or miss the bus.
World Bolshevism or German Victory!
Not be, or be? to be or not to be?

SAGITTARIUS

THE MOVIES

"Nine Men," at the New Gallery
"One Day of War," at the Regal
"Random Harvest," at the Empire

The quality of realism in Harry Watt's *Nine Men* is remarkable. It is more than an absence of emotional padding; a positive quality, which one looks for (and may sometimes find) in Russian films, but rarely elsewhere. *Wake Island*, for example, representing the Hollywood attempt to come to grips with the war, was, to my mind, slick and rather shocking, however much one might allow for American love of melodrama. All the material was there for a film as good as Harry Watt's, but there were possibilities, too, of an A. E. W. Mason novelette, and novelette it had to be. Compare the heroic major of the American film with the Sergeant Watson, no less heroic, of *Nine Men*. The former, played by Brian Donlevy, had all the character that a good commander in a tough spot might have; one couldn't help admiring him, thinking that no doubt someone of his type had actually led bravely on the real Wake Island, but not for a moment did this fictional hero deviate from the role of a hero of fiction. He might have come out of *The Four Feathers* or *The Saturday Evening Post* or *The Strand Magazine*, or anywhere else where soldiers bleed decorously in print. Much the same might be said against Mr. Noel Coward's celebrated performance as a destroyer's captain: acceptable but intrinsically stagey. But in the sergeant of *Nine Men*, undemonstrative though the film is, one meets a soldier and a human being; he puts recruits through their battle training, barks on the parade ground, has a story to tell in the evening, and the fact that we don't see him at home at Christmas or gazing at a photograph in a pocket-book makes him not less but more convincing. He holds the eye without ever drawing the limelight. The aspect shown to us of a soldier among soldiers is complete in itself. His professional manner, his behaviour in action, his voice that underlines the story taking place before our eyes: all are revealing in the way that routine and small actions reveal. The part is admirably played by Major Jack Lambert, and we do not question the authenticity of his performance. The "skirmish" in the desert in which with eight companions he holds out against the Italians is beautifully realised. They are trying to shove a lorry in the sand when two aeroplanes come down and machine-gun them; the lorry blows up, two men are wounded; they have to struggle forwards on foot. At last they reach a deserted hut, which, with ammunition giving out, they decide to hold. The sniping, attacks, sorties, reconnoitring and final rescue by British tanks, all give the impression of pin-sharp accuracy. I have never seen a film in which the behaviour of soldiers in battle was so naturally and vividly depicted; it is as though a front-line glimpse from a newsreel had been expanded and given unity. Five of the nine soldiers, I believe, were professional actors, the others not, and there is no means of telling which is which. That is a good test of realistic direction. The enemy, too, for once are neither clowns nor robots. The dialogue, written by Harry Watt, is brilliantly lifelike, full of larks and reticences. *Nine Men*, produced in the documentary tradition, makes no concessions at all to movie taste, but I shall be surprised if it does not excite audiences.

One Day of War is a record by 160 Soviet cameramen of June 13th, 1942. This day in the life of a nation provides a grim and moving impression of all fronts from Lake Ladoga to the Asian steppes, in the ruthless style of the earlier news documentaries of the Stalingrad and Leningrad battles. The camera peers through the window slat of a tank to photograph the Nazis turning tail and dropping before machine-gun fire only thirty yards away; a submarine attacks and sinks a convoy ship; enemy planes, hardly more distant than a street's width, are shot down and slide out of sight with smoke pouring out from them. And we see not only the various battlefronts, with Leningrad under shell-fire and Sebastopol holding, but tank factories, coal mines, oil towns in a furious hurry of production. A remarkable sequence shows a successful attack by guerillas on a town behind the German lines.

Random Harvest is a very long, emotional, earnest, well-acted, Hollywood-English drama about an officer of the last war who gets blown up and suffers from split personality. He starts a new life and then gets run over and resumes the old one. Each life means, of course, another woman. Greer Garson is the lucky woman, and Ronald Colman provides the personality that clicks to and fro; both give admirable performances. In fact, I rather enjoyed this film, though it reeks of the studio, and every landscape looks as though one could put one's foot through it. Devonshire, especially, is precarious.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Coppelia," at the New Theatre

The short winter season of the Sadler's Wells Ballet at the New Theatre opened on Monday night with *Coppelia*. It is evident that with the three principal dancers who remain to Miss de Valois taking the three chief parts, this ballet is to be one of the main pillars of the repertoire for the future. Anyone who has seen the Company's performances of it in recent years will at first inevitably regret the absence of Mary Honer, who seemed almost born to play Swanhilda. Margot Fonteyn, however, puts into this exacting part which she has taken over all her charm and exquisite grace, and will give an individual and subtle interpretation. Alexis Rassine, who danced with a youthful sparkle and zest which did not conceal the finer points of his technique, seemed ideally matched as her partner, particularly in the difficult *pas-de-deux* in the third act. His own *variation* was as brilliant a display of the classical as has been seen in London in recent years. *Coppelia* is a work which demands a strong *corps de ballet*, and it is here that the ravages of the call-up are most apparent. There are also dangerous *longueurs*, for modern taste, in the character of Dr. Coppelius, but Robert Helpmann's inexhaustible sense of comedy transformed it into something that was a delight to watch.

Correspondence

FAMINE IN INDIA

SIR,—The third paragraph in your article of 16th January is unfair. So far from India having paid tribute to this country she has redeemed her sterling debt to us—a process begun before the war and greatly accelerated since. India has no debt now except what is represented by internal assets such as Railways. You assume that profits on Indian jute mills have been sent home to British shareholders whereas Indians have not only their own jute mills (conditions worse than British-managed mills), but are very large shareholders in British-managed mills and share in the profits to which you refer. Assuming that your calculation of the excess of Indian exports over imports is correct, why has India imposed heavy tariffs on British exports to India which would help to put the balance right, and why do you omit all reference to multilateral trade by which such balances are adjusted? The writer seems ignorant of the processes of Indian trade—I have had 50 years' experience of it. W. F. JOHNSTON

[We are, of course, aware that for the first time in history the balance of trade swung to India's advantage in 1931, and that her exports of war supplies have now given her, like other indebted portions of the Empire, a favourable sterling balance. That in no way affects our statement that for nearly two centuries a steadily rising drain of wealth went on from India, as witnessed by the negative balance of trade—in reality a tribute, though it went to the British owning class and not to the British Exchequer. It cannot have amounted to less than £1,000 millions in the last century. The profits, salaries and savings invested on the spot drawn by Englishmen from India were, of course, a vastly greater amount. What figures in this negative balance is the gain which Englishmen were able to withdraw from India? Certainly Indian firms were also making extortionate profits, notably the cotton mills. The difference in the two cases is this: that an Indian profiteer spends his gains in India mainly on Indian goods and services and they continue to keep Indian labour employed. A Scottish shareholder in a Calcutta jute mill spends his swollen unearned gains in Dundee, and they cease to circulate in India. The result was that this "tribute," over two centuries, went largely to build up our capital equipment, while India remained industrially backward. We made at the time referred to sufficiently careful inquiries in Calcutta and Dundee to satisfy ourselves that the shares in these mills were held almost entirely in Scotland. Any change there may have been is quite recent. Of course a great part of these payments were made by way of triangular trade: Indians adopted protection to build up their backward industries. If they had imported more British goods it could only have been by increasing their exports: the balance would have remained negative.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

ALIEN PIONEER CORPS

SIR,—Your comments on the film issued by the Ministry of Information are extremely to the point. *Why* must doctors dig trenches instead of saving people's lives? *Why* must we do without our clocks and watches while the watchmakers drive in piles? And *why*, above all, must highly capable men do the work of unskilled labourers when their one desperate longing is to be allowed to fight Hitler at the front? One of them writes to me as follows:

"We find ourselves worrying all the time, feeling physically sick when hearing accounts of battles, and having letters from friends overseas, itching to go out to do something at this critical time—all in vain. We hear of daring exploits, feats of espionage or intelligence coups, and we feel that we could have done it, too. . . .

"But we are not 'eligible' for transfer. And the papers aren't full of indignation about the waste of chaps like us. . . . We feel the disgrace of it. And all the time we are amongst those whom the police really *can* know about. Our characters were vouched for by consuls-general, sponsors in this country, guarantors at our tribunals. They have huge files about our whole lives ever since we were school kids. . . . Yet we get worse treatment than Czechs and Poles whom nobody knows anything at all about. . . . 'Free French' come in from Africa; just now Vichy collaborators, future staff officers, deep in the secrets of the war. Why this idiotic carelessness about them, and this equally idiotic caution in our case? If they suspect us in this way they should reintern us; if they don't, they should give us our chance."

The fact is, of course, that Colonel Blimp is still busy in our midst, and in this instance shields Hitler from many of his most convinced and ardent enemies.

DOROTHY F. BUXTON

IGNORANT INTERVIEWERS

SIR,—Last July I was interviewed and directed to work in a war nursery. I was not allowed to continue my work as nursery teacher in a private school, and furthermore any training, other than that in a hospital, was not permissible. Wishing to be trained in some aspect of child care, I entered a babies' hospital, but was soon disillusioned by the treatment of the children and returned to the Ministry of Labour to obtain the necessary permission for teaching in a war nursery. I was informed that no permission would be granted and that the man who directed me to do such work had no business to do such a thing! My interviewer expressed her opinion (a woman this time) that there was very little difference between nursery school teaching and hospital nursing! She had never heard of nursery school training colleges and knew nothing of the L.C.C. course of child care, which prepares students for nursery schools.

Tied down by red tape, hampered by unintelligence and an inadequate knowledge of her work, she could only apply to the powers that be in London, while I am left to wait, perhaps for months.

Surely these interviewers should be trained and educated for their job of dealing with us conscripts, and perhaps know when and how to give the correct directions? PHYLLIS ILES

THE TECHNICIAN CLASS

SIR,—We appreciate your praise for the action of Sir Stafford Cripps in associating himself with engineering technicians, who as you say, may run the world of to-morrow.

Many of us have risen from the working class, and have maintained our contact by building up our own trade union (The Association of Supervising Staffs and Engineering Technicians) which is affiliated to the Trades Union Congress.

With our knowledge of industrial conditions, we welcome the Beveridge Report, but we realise only too well that the Report will be useless without providing planned employment for the millions of able-bodied men and women who live in Britain.

We have seen what can be done in this direction by the gigantic Five Year Plans of the Soviet Union. We must see that plans are developed for our country, and the dead-hand of the 1922 Committee must be severed. Too long have these parasites sacrificed the well-being of their country upon the altar of Mammon. WILL ROWE

Hon. Secretary, Central London Branch of A.S.S.E.T.

CHURCH SCHOOLS

SIR,—As chairman of the Managers of a "Church" school, I would like to ask your contributor:

1. What *proof* is there that "Church" schools are, *as a whole*, less efficient than "Council" schools?

2. What evidence is there that the clergy are, *in general*, an influence obstructive to educational progress?

3. (*a*) What proportion of Church of England clergymen does the writer suppose are militant Tories?

(*b*) What proportion of the local authorities controlling districts now served by "Church" schools are *not* under the control of a Tory majority?

4. Are equal educational opportunities for all children best secured by uniformity of educational organisation in districts of different character?

The above questions do not, as is sometimes assumed by opponents of the "Dual System," relate to self-evident propositions. We are willing to be convinced, but by proof and not by mere assertion.

VICTOR F. HONNIBALL

A T.V.A. FOR SCOTLAND

SIR,—The article in your issue of January 2nd on Hydro-Electrification in Scotland gives the impression that the scheme is primarily for the benefit of Big Business. If this accusation is correct this scheme falls far short of that classic example of regional planning in electrification—the Tennessee Valley Authority, which project, in the words of the Act of Congress, "shall be considered primarily as for the benefit of the people of the section as a whole, and particularly, the domestic and rural consumers to whom the power can economically be made available, and accordingly that sale to and use by industry shall be a secondary purpose."

This Authority, too, co-operates with state-planning commissions to preserve the beauty of the region, and for this purpose employs a planning staff whose services are incidentally available to any community. Model planning and zoning schemes for cities and counties have been prepared by the Authority, and made available through the state-planning commissions. Areas adjacent to dams are landscaped and provided with car parks and overlook buildings, whilst suitable areas are set aside for public outings, and for private use for summer cabins.

ENGINEER

BLIMP AND BEVERIDGE

SIR,—On the date set aside by A.B.C.A. for discussion of the Beveridge Report, I happened to be in a camp where there was a temporary shortage of officers, and for the moment none available for the discussion. As I am on the "roster" for "Discussions and talks with the Forces," and had a copy of the Report with me, I offered, on the suggestion of the men, to open the discussion. I was, of course, met by the ban, but not defeated. It was agreed to hold the discussion, leaving the subject open. And so I talked on "Jack the Giant Killer, and the Five Giants," and I named the giants (Want, Disease, Ignorance, Idleness, Squalor).

I suppose it is part of what every woman knows that authority, *per se*, is faintly ridiculous; authority in the livery of stupidity becomes a public Aunt Sally. In any case I am willing to lend the W.O. the "Woman's Book of Household Wisdom," in which it is laid down that "It is wiser not to give an order that you know will not be obeyed." N. K. W.

SAMUEL PALMER

SIR,—An editorial note of yours accuses Mr. Geoffrey Grigson of "spoiling his case by over-statement" because he referred to Samuel Palmer's "pastoral sentiment being in debt to Claude, and his exuberant richness (walls of corn, etc.) to Breughel." But there is no question here of Mr. Grigson having a case to overstate. The Claude influence is so obvious that I thought it not worth mentioning in the book that has occasioned these letters. From a hundred panegyrics on Claude in Palmer's published correspondence I pick these at random: "If a youth of seventeen is not charmed by a fine Claude, no amount of art or nature-culture will avail him." "In the painting of ground I think Claude is at the top. Indeed, where is he not? His knolls, so softly clad, are round and figure-like," etc. And *look at Palmer's pictures.*

As to the editorial note's "is there any evidence that Palmer ever even saw a Breughel?" Yes, indeed, there is plenty of evidence. But why this professional art-dealing language about an unusually intelligent and and literate painter who made no bones about his influences, but was always talking and writing about them? One might as well say "is there any evidence that Blake ever saw a Michael Angelo?" JOHN PIPER

INTERNATIONAL ARTS CENTRE

SIR,—Many of your readers are familiar with the activities of the International Arts Centre. Few are aware of the financial difficulties against which we have been battling since our opening in 1941. The easy access to non-members which we offer is a valuable feature in wartime when many people can only come during leave spent in London. This, however, does not contribute to financial stability and rather than close our doors to non-members I am appealing to your readers to send a donation to meet our considerable deficit. E. MARGARET DIGHTON,

International Arts Centre,
22 St. Petersburgh Place, W.C.2.

BOOKS IN GENERAL

"We are mighty fine fellows," Stevenson wrote in an often quoted sentence, "but we cannot write like Hazlitt"; to the modern admirer of Hazlitt that phrase comes from the wrong quarter. A journalist gets shy of the histrionic gestures of his profession and we ease away from these capering writers. There is a whole line of them: Carlyle, Meredith, Stevenson, men in love with the resonance of their own voices and who display too much phrase and acumen in hiding the coolness of their hearts under the warmth of their sentiments. Hazlitt, never at his best in the world of feeling yet very personal in his accent, looks like a founder of the line. A French acquaintance of mine finds this most masculine of our critics, "very mild, very English"; perhaps there is a clue here. For if he is mild, Hazlitt is not English. He is actually three-parts Irish; and if the Irish have a fault it is one we often wince at in Hazlitt's writing: he has *the air* of feeling something. He is not actually feeling that thing. The most ferocious Irish rebels, the most ingenious Irish casuists and intrigants often reveal a kind of intellectual distraction underneath. The English pragmatists or the unflinching Frenchmen are astonished to find the Irish mind so inconclusive. This is no doubt a manifestation of sociability. The Irish have raised sociability to the rank of the fine arts, and Hazlitt especially had this gift; I mean intellectually, of course, for he was notoriously uncertain in company. But his writing is sociable. It is the work of a man who thinks that ideas must shake down together, that ideas are men talking, that ideas must submit to the judgment of an experienced if unwise world.

He is utterly unlike his *People With One Idea* in the *Table Talk* essay, where he is writing about those whose King Charles's head is reform: "A topic of this sort, of which the person himself may be considered as almost sole proprietor and patentee, is an estate for life, free from all encumbrance of wit, thought or study: you live upon it as a settled income."

Yet Hazlitt was not a sceptic and *causeur*. Like Montaigne he had faith. In life Hazlitt was often a morose man, often malicious and quarrelsome, a tea-drinking radical who bears out Samuel Butler's saying that all radicals have bad digestions. On paper Hazlitt was a revolutionary. He lived, one would say, in a state of warfare with himself and his friends and yet, in his writing, manages to attain the tolerance and good sense of one resting on the remains of his egoism. He writes like a duellist or a fencer who is going to do everything except kill his man. Compare him with Stendhal here: Stendhal's idolatry of Napoleon leads him to an unblushing devotion to energy and naked power; a Celtic cloudiness hangs over Hazlitt's idolatry. Napoleon is still the Revolution for him. He is Liberty's last kick against the enslaving mysticism of Legitimacy. Every twist of Stendhal's rapier seems to kill an opponent, at whom Hazlitt, son of a preacher, would sooner preach.

Still, if we are looking for Plutarchian foils for Hazlitt, it is better to return to England, and in England he has always been seen against the wrong background. For some reason Hazlitt has been saddled with the tearful patronage and forgiveness of Lamb. It is very hard for a teetotaller to survive the forgiveness of a tippler, but that is what Hazlitt's reputation has had to endure. To hear Lamb drooling away about the most level-headed, the most penetrating, the most masculine of English critics! Of course Hazlitt was a fish out of water in the Lamb circle. His company is with the group that I always call "the colonists"—with Cobbett and Tom Paine, who like himself had spent time in America. The force of Hazlitt's political passions was as strong as theirs, though his passion was more discursive and in one sense more extreme. For Hazlitt believed, as a matter of faith, in being in the minority. His non-conformity was perpetual; it was a principle of growth; Paine, on the other hand, had visualised a fixed, abstract world where Liberty and Justice reigned, and Cobbett could always be relied upon to run away from his own rash victories to become the solid farmer in his country boots. We know what Cobbett and Paine got from America but what did Hazlitt get? It has always been assumed that he was too young—he was five when he went and nine when he returned; and Mr. Birrell, who treats him with that firm malice which one experienced non-conformist loves to show towards a predecessor, says that Hazlitt got nothing at all. I cannot believe this. One pictures the Hazlitt family, Irish, Unitarians, members of a singular sect—a bad beginning for a writer—on their American venture. The elder Hazlitt had stuck out against his country as boldly as a pro-Boer. He fought for the better treatment of American prisoners in the Irish camps. He had gone to a new world expecting his bland and rational religion would be welcome in the land where privilege and hierarchy had been abolished. Instead, he found himself edged off into country huts and despised missions, an intellectual treated as though he were a member of the Salvation Army. The Hazlitts had arrived too soon. There is a letter written by the boy to his father on their return to England which, one is sure, reflects dutifully the family disillusion:

> My dear Papa,—I shall never forget that we came to america. If we had not come to america, we should not have been away from one another, though now it cannot be helped. I think for my part that it would have been better if the white people had not found it out. Let the (others) have it for themselves, for it was made for them.

At an age when we are most responsive to myths, Hazlitt was brought up in a country where the myth of kingship had been thrown out. He came back to England to grow up as morose as any Yankee on the subject. And when he comes to that most difficult moment in his idolatry of Napoleon—Napoleon's ascent to the throne—Hazlitt's defence is, first, that he is a revolutionary, not a republican; and secondly, the very American argument that Napoleon had, so to speak, worked his way up from the bottom and therefore made every European monarchy look shabby in the process. An excuse which, however, Hazlitt was not to allow Bernadotte.

The Life of Napoleon is very far from being a series of drifting historical essays, though it may contain too many crescendos of eloquence for our taste. Hazlitt went to France for his material. It is admirably displayed and he has, of course, that general pictorial gift, the power to unroll a panorama which, in more hectic fashion, was Carlyle's. The *Life* is not as horrific and as Gothic a contraption as *The French Revolution*; it is altogether clearer in its grasp of the meaning of political intrigues. Hazlitt was a superb descriptive writer. And though Hazlitt is a partisan of the most indignant kind, writing in old age out of the worn-out emotions of his generation and filled by the assumption that he alone, among the Burkes, the Wordsworths and the Southeys, had not ratted—although he is a partisan, he does not leave the obligatory blurs of faith. Hazlitt was never intellectually afraid. He warms but he never loses his sense of the world and even his attack upon the Russians—who committed the grave fault of not losing the war to Napoleon—does not loosen his grasp of the physical scene. It is amusing to compare his presentation of Napoleon with Tolstoy's. There is a thoroughness about these extremists.

It is when we pick up his finest book, *The Spirit of the Age*, that we see the sanity of Hazlitt's taste and of his judgment of character. It is fatal for a brilliant man, a master of epigram, not to have a sense of the world; and Hazlitt's epigrams have the fortunate quality of clearing the ground, so that judgment may grow. There is Godwin, for example, seen in old age as easy as an old glove, abandoned by the young

> because, the fault, then, of Mr. Godwin's philosophy in one word, was too much ambition—"by that sin fell the angels." He conceived too nobly of his fellows.

There is Coleridge:

> All that he has done of moment, he had done 20 years ago; since then he may be said to have lived on the sound of his own voice.

There is the picture of Bentham (who was Hazlitt's landlord):

> He is something between Franklin and Charles Fox, with the comfortable double-chin and sleek thriving look of the one and the quivering lip, the restless eye and the animated acuteness of the other. His eye is quick and lively; but it glances not from object to object; but from thought to thought. He is evidently a man occupied with some train of fine and inward association. He regards the people about him no more than the flies of the summer. He meditates the coming age. He hears and sees only what suits his purpose, or some "foregone conclusion" and looks out for facts and passing occurrences in order to put them into his logical machinery and grind them into the dust and powder of some subtle theory, as the miller looks out for grist to his mill. Add to this physiognomical sketch the minor points of costume, the open shirt collar, the single-breasted coat, the old-fashioned boots and ribbed stockings and you will find Mr. Bentham's general appearance a singular mixture of boyish simplicity and the venerableness of age.

Hazlitt's balance is not the flat estimate of commonsense, but rather something achieved by controlling his quickness of mind. Southey's umbrella and his clockwork manners seem about to wreck the portrait; rapidly Hazlitt jumps to steady it. The Wordsworth might have been wrecked by the comparison of *The Excursion* to a banquet of apple dumplings, but Hazlitt somehow manages to subdue his malice. The fact is that Hazlitt writes like a talker, and a good talker is not likely to be a man of one idea, one mood, or one theory; he will want to spread himself. One sees him beset by no theory, because he is beset by all theories and driven to get down to what is acceptable to most intelligent men. That is why, no doubt, we come upon no startling ideas or fashions in his criticisms—as we do, for example, in the criticisms of Coleridge—but are conscious of an extraordinarily closer awareness of what is plain to us in the writers we read, but which we have not known how to put in words. It is really a capacity for description, one of the rarest qualities of criticism; for to describe is to discriminate, and we are inclined to burgle literature for what suits our fancy rather than to see what is there.

Earlier I suggested a comparison with Cobbett. There is much to be said for it. Both writers, though in different degrees, are self-taught; and perhaps they both write as they talk, so that we hear the emphasis of a personal accent, because they were not, first of all, professional writers. Hazlitt's familiar style reminds one indeed of the fresh style of certain painters when they have taken to writing. Like Cobbett he is familiar with the spirit of contradiction and the delight of personal reminiscence. But where Cobbett lived in a matter-of-fact world, Hazlitt's was a world of general ideas infused by his inner dreams. Cobbett's experience makes him more and more certain of the farmer's first article of faith: that all chickens come home to roost. Hazlitt's experience makes him more and more analytical. Once more he goes over the long dream of his early reading and embellishes that habit of "living to oneself" which protected him from too complete a consciousness of his calamitous life. And except when he is whipping up his eloquence, except when talk rises to incantation which he has not the feeling to sustain, we accept his dream because it is so vividly his life. Of all the writers of that time, when the world and all its ideas seemed still to be contained by literature, he is the one whose words sound like the words of a living, arguing intelligence. They do not slur away into the rich but undenominated plains of a generation's style and print.

V. S. Pritchett

RAPHAEL

Raphael. Phaidon Edition. *Allen and Unwin.* 20s.

"Since the beginning of the twentieth century," says a note on the dust jacket of this volume, "there has been in progress among the general public a marked decline in appreciation of Raphael's work." This is undoubtedly true, and the Phaidon Press have undertaken a valuable service in attempting to show Raphael in a new light. The decline in his reputation was due partly to fashion in the narrow sense of the word, for it was on Raphael, together with Graeco-Roman sculpture and engravings after Guercino, that the nineteenth century based its conception of feminine beauty and elegance. *Belle comme une Madone de Raphael* was the highest term of praise, until the aesthetic movement popularised a more sharply accented cast of features. And partly the drift away from Raphael was due to the growing ascendancy of a colouristic or sensational, as opposed to a formal, approach to the problem of picture making. To the generation of the Impressionists the faultless tone values of Velazquez were more exciting than choice and orderly form, and after three centuries of unchallenged supremacy, Raphael became a museum bore, until rediscovered by Picasso.

Both at the zenith and in the decline of his recent fame, Raphael was seldom admired for the quality which had most impressed his contemporaries—the sublime powers of invention and composition which he manifests in the frescoes of the Papal apartments in the Vatican. These qualities were, as Sir Joshua Reynolds had observed in his *Discourses*, beyond the stretch of an untrained mind and too complex for the glance of travelling *dilettanti*. In consequence Raphael was judged by those of his Madonnas and portable altarpieces which had been carried off as trophies by the conquering Saxons in the eighteenth century. These are beautiful enough, Heaven knows, and nothing can justify that landmark in English Philistinism, Samuel Butler's attack on the Ansidei Madonna. But it is easy to understand how the evenness of Raphael's style and the placid perfection of his types may have had, in a less confident age, a slightly irritating effect. To correct such an impression, if it still exists, the compilers of this volume have given particular emphasis to two aspects of Raphael's art: his portraits and his frescoes in the Stanze. That Raphael with his matchless powers of generalisation should have painted some of the most highly individualised portraits of the Renaissance, proves the very complex character of his genius. In such pictures as the *Madellena Doni* and the *Inghirami*, mastery of solid form is combined with subtle human insight. The unknown *Cardinal* in the Prado is surely one of the most delicately observed heads in all painting.

But fascinating as the portraits are, they are only a wonderful by-product. The essence of Raphael's art must be sought in the frescoes, and in this volume they are made more accessible than ever before by admirable photographs and by a method of presentation sometimes abused, but here completely justified, the copious use of details. Those who know only Raphael's easel pictures will be amazed at the direct and vigorous way in which the frescoes are painted. They will also be surprised at the variety of his handling, at the contrast, for example, between the heads of the Swiss guardsmen, painted under the influence of Giorgione and Titian in a bold colouristic style, and the severe Michelangelesque of the figures in the *Fire in the Borgo*. We marvel at Raphael's power of assimilating the artistic as well as the philosophic achievements of his time, although we may feel that he did not always succeed in assimilating Michelangelo: the Heraclitus in the *School of Athens* is Michelangelo digested; the Heliodorus is not. These details also show Raphael's gift of creating a race of godlike men and women. While the compositional scheme of the Stanza della Segnatura is the most perfect exposition of neo-Platonic humanism, interlacing the Christian and pagan philosophies, the figures themselves embody the same idea in their balance of physical and spiritual beauty. We gladly give up, for these details, some of the well-known Madonnas which have been omitted, although we should have welcomed the frescoes in Santa Maria della Pace and perhaps some details, from the *Transfiguration*, which is only reproduced as companion to the tiny *Vision of Ezekiel*.

The seventeen colour plates present a familiar problem. To the trained eye they are extremely distasteful; but this book will be bought by many people who seldom have a chance of seeing an original Raphael and who will naturally want to have some idea what his colour is like. Some of these plates, notably the Sistine Madonna and the Three Graces at Chantilly, make a wholly false impression; others like the *Madonna in the Meadow* and the Borghese *Deposition* are not altogether untrue. It is almost impossible to do good colour reproductions in war conditions, and arguable that mediocre colour is more in the public interest than none.

The introduction is by a learned and ingenious Continental scholar, Dr. W. Suida, but is not in his best vein. Admittedly, to introduce Raphael in 22 pages was a formidable task, but the author never quite makes up his mind whether to give a summary or to attempt an essay. The translation preserves in many places the German idiom and even the German spelling of names, a practice which makes, in the aggregate, rather a discourteous impression, and may arouse prejudice not only against the book itself but against the distinguished scholars who are our guests in this country. But these slight defects should not blind us to the value of these splendid reproductions nor lessen our gratitude for the work of popularisation which the Phaidon Press is accomplishing.

KENNETH CLARK

PUB CRAWL

The Pub and the People. By MASS-OBSERVATION, *Gollancz.* 16s.

Mass-Observation began with an idea: Why not apply to ourselves the same methods of scrutiny that the anthropologist applies to the Trobriand islander? Brilliant idea; but it doesn't work out so easily. Where, for example, are you to start? Not from scratch, or the result will merely be to tell people laboriously what they know already. *Something* must be taken for granted; the question is, how much? That is the first snag facing the anthropologist of English life, and other snags pile up. How much that is of value can be discovered or checked by the simple method of observation? A study of dress, of pubs, of queueing habits, for example, may yield interesting detail, but what does that detail add up to? Is it possible to discover an underlying culture-pattern in lives that must remain, like the iceberg, nine-tenths out of view of the observer? What more, in fact, can Mass-Observation do than isolate a small field of human behaviour in which values and motives are necessarily left out of account? These are a few of the initial difficulties. Luckily, perhaps, in the excitement of the chase—which combined the thrills of detection with the claims of science—ends were pushed aside in favour of means. Mass-Observation got going, and revealed itself in a stream of books, pamphlets and articles as a fact-mongering, diffuse, pompous, raw and

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exciting concern: very much alive, in fact, and remarkably unscientific.

The Pub and the People shows much the same qualities, good and bad, as the Coronation survey. It is a pudding of a book, from which, almost anywhere, you can pull a plum or a pebble. An investigation into the reasons why people drink beer, for example, produces this plum of plums:

> A man aged 66 wrote: Why I drink Beer, because it is food, drink, and medicine to me, my Bowels work regular as clockwork, and I think that is the Key to health, also lightening affects me a lot, I get such a thirst from Lightening, and full of Pins and Needles, if I drink from the tap it's worse, Beer makes me better the more I drink better I feel, neither does it make me drunk, when a Boy a horn of Beer before Breakfast was the foundation for the day.

Any book that gets behind the façade of human nature to that extent is obviously valuable as well as entertaining. But the pebbles!

> Physiologically, the act of drinking is a complicated combination of both voluntary and reflex movements. The same can be said of it when regarded as a social phenomenon; it is accompanied by a number of conventions and habits which are both voluntary (consciously willed) and reflex (unconsciously reacting from stimuli).

Well, there you are. This second element—the thud of the flat-footed district visitor—is almost as common as the rich and unexpected *chose vue*. The contents of *The Pub and the People* can be divided into several kinds: (1) revelations of people observed, in writing or conversation—often remarkable; (2) comments by the observer, usually in anthropologese; (3) pointlessly factual descriptions ("Drinks slowly and deliberately about half a glass, puts glass down and slides it along table, puts hand round glass, leaves it there a little, then drinks quickly, puts down glass and sucks lips, etc."); (4) statistics, from written sources or observation—these vary in importance but are worth having; (5) literary and historical matter; (6) generalisation and summing-up—scattered, occasionally suggestive, more often obvious and slapdash.

I have tried to discover some sort of arrangement in the compilation of *The Pub and the People*, but can find none—not even an index. The material is clustered in chapters under the headings "Drink," "Drink-Servers," "Drinking Places" and so on, but every chapter begins and ends nowhere, and has the same mixture of fact, anecdote, statistics and desultory comment. Since Mass-Observation—if one is to judge by its publications to date—succeeds on the reporting side and fails when it tries to put its material together, would it not be better to drop the scientific banner (which involves much jargon and pretentious padding) and adopt instead the more modest title of "documentary"? Mass-Observers are, in fact, journalists rather than anthropologists, and the current book with which to compare *The Pub and the People* isn't *The Stone Men of Malekula* but one of our war documentaries such as *Front Line*, 1941-2. In conciseness, objectivity, and orderly statement this Government "documentary" leaves *The Pub and the People* standing. It seems to me that Mr. Harrisson and his followers could double the value of the work they are doing if they kept some such comparison in mind.

Meanwhile, *The Pub and the People* gives a seething if incoherent picture of pub life in Bolton before the war. Beer, in the form of mild, is the prevalent drink, and this is drunk, mostly in vaults (public bars), during last hours and over week-ends. The number of pub-goers in Bolton (population, 180,000) is estimated at roughly 20,000 and their beer consumption works out at something over 3 pints a head a day; Bolton had, in 1937, one less pub than in 1848, though the population in that time more than trebled. If Bolton is typical the pub has declined in social importance, and is likely to go on declining. It provides very little comfort (in what other country in the world do human beings look for intoxication *standing up?*), its alcohol-tobacco haze has to compete with day-dreams provided by the cinema and the wireless, and the average Englishman to-day is more inclined to "read about it" in the paper than to spout his head off in a boozer. One of the most curious and fascinating revelations of *The Pub and the People* is the amorphous flow of talk, half-argumentative, half-thinking-aloud that goes on in the aggregate among a group of people who meet night after night to drink together. Politics, discussion, hardly come into it, even sex usually is absent; it is more than anything like the desultory monologues of children in nursery schools. This, to anyone who knows pub atmospheres, has the authentic drag of opening time:

> Landlady . . . talks about her cough. Friend, sympathising, also suffers, "It's my throat, the chest. . . ." (Puts her hand to her throat). She then says, "Very quiet."
>
> Landlady: "Unusually quiet."
>
> Friend: "Time's dragging since tea, and nothing to do."
>
> Landlady: "D'you know what's on at the Palais I didn't notice the paper? Hasn't it been cold to-day, what a change?"
>
> Friend: "Terrible to-day. I noticed it as soo as I got up. I mustn't get a cold. I soon ge chilled through. . . . I haven't had the kitche window open to-day. (Yawns widely). I'm yawning."

Here, with cruel precision, the Mass-Observe does bring home to us an aspect of human nature which we tend to ignore because it opens appalling gulfs. In fact, *The Pub and the People* gives a most melancholy impression of the place where we are supposed to go for genial alleviation. Are the men of Bolton unusually miserable, dour, and stupid? Perhaps not; but their effigies look grim on paper. G. W. STONIER

TWO LIVES

The Navy and Defence. By LORD CHATFIELD. *Heinemann.* 15s.

I Guarded the Water-Front. By A. P. WOODS. *Stanley Paul and Co.* 12s. 6d.

Mr. Woods and Lord Chatfield both had a flying start. (If we want equality of opportunity, we shall have to arrange a free choice of parents.) Mr. Woods, senior, was a pilot, and his son was born at Gravesend. When the lad sailed for Australia in his early 'teens, he had some years' experience behind him, mostly on the Thames pleasure boats. These seem to have been mainly staffed by relatives of his: it is one of his queer stories how, as foretold by his grandmother, four of his uncles and his father were drowned, within a few months of the 48th birthday of each of them. Heredity and environment have conspired to make of him a pier-master without a rival on the Thames. Lord Chatfield did not see his father till he had reached the age of four; Captain Chatfield came back in 1877, the year of Mr. Woods' birth, from the South American station, and the future Commander-in-Chief made his first voyage, and was seasick for the first time, when he joined his father, who had been appointed to command the "Thunderer" at Malta next year. Like Mr. Woods he started his career at thirteen, when he went aboard the old three-decker "Britannia" at Dartmouth.

Still, the odd blend of pride and humility, of zest, humour and dignity, on which both these books depend for their success as self-portraits, is rare among the most dutiful of admirals' and pilots' sons. Whatever our opportunities, autobiography for most of us slips easily into self-justification: the narrow path between peevish-

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ness and pomposity, bragging and whining, takes a lot of finding. A life of adventure like the pier-master's is apt to end on a note of apathy, tempered by a grievance or two; one of professional ambition like the Commander-in-Chief's on a note of disillusionment enlivened by jealousy. For in the professions there is often "no friendship at the top," and less and less as one climbs, and among those who work for a living there comes a time when the grand-children are growing up and there is not much left to look forward to but the old-age pension. A sense of frustration is not the monopoly of any one class or any one walk of life. Mr. Woods is nearly right when he says, "Most of us want the same things. Decent living conditions, good food, and above all the right to order our own lives." But the right is not enough: we need, though we may not know it, the will as well. Lord Chatfield was married on July 29th, 1909, at 35; his honeymoon was to be spent in Switzerland, he was to see "inside Europe" for the first time, well as he knew the coast line; in September he would go on to the Italian Lakes. But at Thun, in mid-August, he got a telegram offering him the flag-captaincy of the Atlantic Fleet. "It was the slowest decision I had ever made: it must have taken at least one hour. We started home next day. Looking back on the past thirty years I can trace my rather unusual career to just that moment." Mr. Woods strikes the corresponding chord. "Many times I have been told, by various shipmates, 'This is going to be my last voyage. I've got a snug job ashore and I'm going to settle down with the wife and kids and do a bit of gardening in the evening.' I never attempted to contradict them. I merely bided my time. Sooner or later came the chance of another trip and—'Oh, well, here I am!'"

Lord Chatfield, going a shade pompous for once, writes of "the struggle between duty and inclination": Mr. Woods' comment is, "It's a common saying of sailors: 'The sea is in his blood.'" What they both show is how much a man gains if he can keep his own soul. Everyone is after it: wives and children, parents and friends, rivals and bosses, toadies and scroungers. The pub, the pictures, the dogs, and the factory, the office, the boardroom, hunting and shooting, society, travel and culture—these are only some of the succulent messes of pottage on offer for the birthright which is every man's own. There is no one who does not wake up one morning or go to bed one night thoroughly afraid of life and ready for any sort of dope to cheer himself up. Even Mr. Woods must have gone stale and Lord Chatfield sour at times. But not often, or they could never have kept it out of their books. Read them and see. They are the life-stories of two men who knew what they wanted of life, wasted no time being educated for or bribed into something else, and made the best of everything and everyone that came along. Up the ladder of ambition, along the road of adventure, each went at his own pace, and at sixty and more both are still rather surprised at the job they have made of life.

KENNETH BELL

COASTAL COMMAND

Coastal Command. *H.M. Stationery Office.* 2*s.*

Coastal Command at War. By "SQUADRON-LEADER TOM DUDLEY GORDON." *Jarrolds.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

The lavish illustrations, the quality of the paper, the number of copies sold (100,000 in less than a fortnight) will make an ordinary publisher, in the grip of restrictions, weep. *Coastal Command* is a slap-up job, and one's first inclination is to say that it couldn't possibly have been done better. Though less dramatic than the earlier *Bomber Command*, text and photographs make the most of material that stretches half-way round the world and covers almost every kind of operation, from reconnaissance over ten million miles of ocean to attacks on Stavanger and Brest and special missions carrying ambassadors to Moscow. Much of this, compared with activities in the other two Commands, is routine, but routine so intricate and varied as to be as thrilling as a detective story. Some of the more dramatic incidents include the spotting of the *Bismarck* in Dobrie Fjord, Dunkirk, submarine hunts, battles with Kondors and Focker-Wulfs. The photographs of these and other incidents are remarkable, and now and then a personal touch lightens the official narrative. A pilot describes meeting a convoy at dawn:

> Those Atlantic convoys are always a grand sight in the early morning. The daylight is filtering now through the thick cloud, and the ships in their neat formation have a sort of waking-up appearance to them—rather like the feel of some trim little village you come across at dawn, having been driven along darkened roads at night. . . . You have the feeling that the convoy is stretching itself, shaking its shoulders and preparing for another long day.

The only criticism that can be made of a publication that uses all the Government resources is that it shows also a governmental caution in several directions. We are assured, in very brief terms, that co-operation with the other commands and services is as complete as possible; the story of the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* is told in some detail—up to the point when they escaped from Brest. Hardly a word about that, though it surely concerned Coastal Command more than anyone. It seems foolish, in an official account such as this is, to leave failures almost unmentioned.

One or two gaps can be filled in from the modest, gossipy, adventurous pages of *Coastal Command at War*. "Squadron-Leader Tom Dudley Gordon" gives some fascinating detail about aircraft, and he at least tells the story of the *S.* and *G.'s* escape, though he does not pass any comment. He has some amusing anecdotes. One of these concerns the red tape that wound itself round the spelling of the word "twerp" which occurred in a wireless message. The Navy preferred to spell it with an "i." But surely, according to the best slang usage, the Navy was wrong.

R.F.

THE MIXTURE AS BEFORE

New Writing and Daylight. Edited by JOHN LEHMANN. *Hogarth Press.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

By far the most interesting (as it is also the longest) of the contributions to the second volume of *New Writing and Daylight* is Julia Strachey's "Pioneer City." This is a piece of considered autobiography describing a "modern" school in 1915 and the sort of home from which a girl would be sent to one of these seminaries of pious, even if agnostic, uplift. Her mother, "short, square and sturdy, in her serviceable 'reform dress' of gun-metal serge" is, at the opening of the extract, on the point of tackling her daughter about the term's report. For the girl, staunchly anarchist, declines, as we are shown in a flash-back, to enter into the spirit of jolly, comradely *citizenship* which the earnest staff of Pioneer City try to awaken in their pupils. But the mother never reaches her point. There are too many interruptions, good works, tame dogs, committee meetings, refugees, cultural enterprises: between them all the daughter's problem gets perpetually postponed.

Success in this kind of writing comes primarily from an irony which is combined with sympathy and from detachment—the experience being allowed to mature over a number of years. Miss

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Strachey has not (to compare her with one of the best writers in the same genre) Christopher Isherwood's economy or his sense of balance, or that talent for imagery which gives his writing a sort of universality, as if his statements were less about landladies and tarts than about life itself. But she has a good descriptive gift, and she has sympathetic irony and detachment, and it is by virtue of these qualities that her piece puts the rest of the personal experiences in this volume into the shade. Reporting on this level, which approaches literature, will have to wait, like many other things, until after the war.

For the rest, *New Writing and Daylight* wears a face that is familiar enough; if the new addition seems a little less arresting than the other members of the family, it may be because we know the features too well by now. The resemblance anyhow is there. Accounts of personal experience to the fore, a section on the theatre and films with (slightly dull) photographs interleaved, criticism and a strong poetry section; the usual sort of names—Day Lewis, Spender, B. L. Coombes, John Lehmann, among the old-timers, plenty of space for the newcomers, mostly from the Forces, mostly young, and a sprinkling from our allies, Greek and Czech. Notable among these is an article on Stefan George by Demstrios Capstanakis, whose study of Rimbaud was an interesting contribution to the last number. M. Capstanakis' method is a kind of evocative lay-out of his subject. This mode of criticism is revealing for a reader coming fresh to a new post, and George is sufficiently little known for the method to be useful. But I fancy that anyone who knew the subject might find the approach naive. A Czech writer, Jivi Nincha, uses naivety deliberately and very skilfully in a presentation of a diary of a young girl.

Laurie Lee, Terence Tiller and L. J. Yates all contribute interesting short poems. There is an ambitiously long poem by W. F. M. Stewart with a certain charm and ease which I ascribe to a fashionable sentimentality. There are three fair Day Lewis's. Among the critical articles Stephen Spender considers the problem of heroic poetry and war; G. W. Stonier sagely emphasises the contribution of America to the film as art; Sewell Stokes is somewhat less balanced in an attempt to do the same for the American stage.

In producing this miscellany once a quarter Mr Lehmann is performing a valuable function. There is nowhere else where either young writers from this country or translations from writers of free Europe would appear. If this issue is judged a little below par, that is not to be captious but rather to judge on the high standard which has been set in back numbers.

THOMAS SMALLBONES

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

MOERAN: *Symphony in G minor.* Hallé Orch., cond. Leslie Heward (H.M.V. C3319–24).

ROY HARRIS: *Symphony No.* 3. Boston Symphony Orch., cond. Koussevitzky (H.M.V. DB.6137–8).

BRAHMS: *Variations on a Theme of Haydn.* Hallé Orch., cond. Malcolm Sargent (Col. DX1105–6).

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Hamlet Fantasy.* Hallé Orch., cond. Constant Lambert (Col. DX1101–2).

RAKOV: *Finale of Danse Suite, and Intermezzo on Kazakh Airs.* Moscow State Philharmonic Orch. (Decca M528).

SCHUBERT: *Sonatine for Violin and Piano, Op.* 137, *No.* 2. Ida Haendel and Anna Kotouska (Decca K1074–5).

LISZT: *Sonnetto di Petrarca, No.* 104. Clifford Curzon (Decca M527).

LISZT: *Paganini Etude in E flat.* Louis Kentner (Col. DB2100).

RACHMANINOFF: *Preludes in G, Op.* 32, *No.* 5, *and in E minor, Op.* 32, *No.* 4. Moura Lympany (Decca K1029).

BRITTEN: *Seven Sonnets of Michelangelo.* Peter Pears (H.M.V. B9302 and C3312).

MARTINI: *Plaisir d'Amour.* John McCormack (H.M.V. DA1829).

IRELAND: *The Soldier,* and *Sea Fever.* Roy Henderson (Decca M526).

BYRD: STANFORD: *Ave Verum Corpus, Heraclitus, and Coelos Ascendit Hodie.* Fleet Street Choir (Decca K1081).

One must congratulate both the Gramophone Company and the British Council for their willingness to further the cause of English music; but, at the risk of seeming ungrateful, one must question the wisdom of spending a lot of money and precious shellac on so dubious a work as E. J. Moeran's enormous G minor Symphony. Apart from the fact that the boneless and ornate romantic style which this composer affects is not representative of what is best in contemporary English music, much better examples of this style could have been found among the six symphonies of Sir Arnold Bax, not one of which has ever been recorded. If the British Council wanted to perpetuate this phase of English music, it might reasonably have chosen Bax's Third or Sixth Symphony. I can see nothing to be said for Moeran's characterless reflection of his greater contemporaries. Indeed, this symphony, for all its elaborate orchestration and display of "profound" feeling, bores through its own lack of conviction. Moreover the composer does not use his medium to produce a clear and therefore memorable outline, nor has he attempted to "reduce" his developments in the interests of strength and sinew with the result that the impression made by each movement is in the last degree vague and imprecise. Instead of dealing a series of well-aimed blows, the symphony flops against the mind like a stingless jelly-fish. The recording tends to deteriorate badly towards the centre of the discs, but the performance is magnificent. Mr. Heward would certainly seem to have a touch of genius. On side 12 are Rawsthorne's Four Bagatelles (not "Eight," as I erroneously stated in these columns last week)—accurate and beautiful miniatures extremely well played by Denis Matthews.

I find it difficult to make up my mind about Roy Harris's Third Symphony, which has reached us in a very forceful and definitive performance. The recording needs a robust, insensitive instrument to withstand the attack: fibre-maniacs and owners of acoustic gramophones are advised to keep away. There is an intellect at work here, and imagination, too, though not of a very flexible order. Sibelius and Walton are called in to assist in moving its stiff levers, but somehow I am left with a feeling of disbelief. It is not that this music errs in any vulgar sense: planned in one big movement, in the course of which the pace is made to seem to increase by dint of halving the note values, this symphony (like Sibelius No. 7) does not set out to charm or lull. It is serious, even grim, and its beauty is sculptural and very northern, though not in the manner of Moeran. It is the finest piece of American music I have heard. And yet . . .

The new set of Brahms-Haydn Variations can scarcely be said to supplant some of the earlier recordings. The performance is respectable but not inspiring. Constant Lambert on this occasion strikes more sparks from the Hallé Orchestra than Malcolm Sargent. His rendering of the Hamlet Fantasy has all the febrile energy, all the over-ripe beauty of Tchaikovsky's most un-Shakespearean vision. The recording must be admitted to be very noisy: whether war-time conditions be the cause or no, English recordings seem to be getting more and more like American ones. The little Russian disc is perfectly harmless and tuneful, well played and extremely academic.

Schubert's Sonatines for Violin and Piano cannot hold a candle to the delicious Duo in A, Op. 162; but they have their charm and ought certainly to be heard from time to time. Miss Haendel gives a most musicianly performance, with some fine legato playing in the Andante.

Liszt's Petrarch Sonnets are among his most personal, poetical and least vulgar compositions. They are just the right length, and the ornament display

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the sequences without overlaying them. Clifford Curzon rightly adopts a mitigated rhapsodical style which serves the piece very well. One may hope he will give us the other two Sonnets. There is, on the other hand, less to be said for the Paganini Étude in E Flat, a piece of empty pianism aggravated by Kentner's intolerably dry delivery. Rachmaninoff's E Minor Prelude is among the least known of the set—perhaps deservedly. Miss Lympany extracts as much music as possible from what amounts to a dull étude, but permits herself, I feel, a little too much rubato in the lovely Prelude in G. This piece ought to slip along like a rigger.

Britten's Michelangelo Sonnets need no further commendation from me; the opinion I expressed of them on their first performance has not been lessened by closer knowledge. Other composers would do well to notice the very skilful and effective use of augmentation in these songs—a device peculiarly well adapted to express the sense of a sonnet. The recording is on the whole excellent, with (for once in a way) enough piano tone; but what has possessed H.M.V. to issue these discs without any indication as to the order in which the sonnets are to be played? As if this were immaterial! The omission is all the more aggravating because the numbers of the sonnets do not correspond with the correct order of playing. It would, one thinks, have been so easy to number the sides. The singing of Peter Pears will not soon be equalled in these songs. He has a voice of a quality very rare in English singers; it is really an operatic voice, but, though he has clearly still some way to go, his command of different styles is remarkable. I should like to hear him as Don José.

I cannot pretend to prefer McCormack's nasal and sentimental rendering of Plaisir d'Amour to Maggie Teyte's wonderful record; but that is a matter of taste, and the song itself is extraordinarily touching.

Roy Henderson gives the Ireland songs all they need, and the Fleet Street Choir's singing of the Ave Verum Corpus is on a level with their performance of the Byrd Mass issued some months back.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

Week-end Competitions

No. 678

Set by Fred Oyster

A book is being compiled of stories illustrating the intelligence of animals. Competitors are asked to submit these, and to send only true stories. Limit, 150 words.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, February 8th.

2. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 675

Set by Raymond Mortimer

A Mr. Donald Wells of Shrewsbury has proclaimed in the *Daily Telegraph*: "If Rome were gutted to-morrow the post-war world would not be one iota the poorer." Prizes amounting to four guineas are offered for the best epigrams inspired by this remark.

Report by Raymond Mortimer

As many as two competitors agree with Mr. Donald Wells, but their entries, astonishing to relate, are not conspicuous for elegance. A number of airmen and soldiers expressed their disgust, some of them in language too forcible for these chaste columns. Several habitual prize-winners were below their usual form, but if none of the entries strikes me as a masterpiece, many deserve an alpha minus. With regret I have finally discarded the work of V. F. Honniball, G. W. Harris, Little Billee, H. Lomax, A. P. P., Rudy, W. J. Strachan and Sir Robert Witt. Ronald Mason is almost prizeworthy: "Haud urbis destructae sed destruentis ruina"; and I like Aggregatus's

We've got the Capitols and Forums where duckey is at home;
He'll remain just as poor if we spare those of Rome.

I am left with twelve competitors among whom to distribute equally the prize money: William Bliss, E. F. C., F. C. C., David Freeman, E. Hibbert, G. T. Holmes, Jason, Allan M. Laing, Arnold Lever, E. M., Violet Palmer and I. C. Saul.

"MAKE THE WORLD SAFE FOR——?"

Be thorough, Wells! London holds beauty too,
And, while your cleansing bombs are gutting Rome,
There's lots of purging *here* for you to do,
For Charity, they say, begins at home.
(WILLIAM BLISS)

BUTLER REDIVIVUS

"The Post-War World"?—Peopled throughout by Wells?
Millions of Donalds? No one else at all?——
Oh! give me rather Dante's several Hells!
O Shrewsbury! O God! O Montreal!
(WILLIAM BLISS)

Tough post-war guys won't feel the loss of Rome,
So long as Donald Wells is safe at home.
(E. F. C.)

All roads, we learnt in my Victorian home,
May lead to sacred and eternal Rome.
"But war's afoot," cries Mr. Donald Wells,:
"The Seven Hills can blaze like seven Hells!"
Heirs of the post-war world we need not pity:
All roads will lead to Letchworth Garden City.
(F. C. C.)

Rome laid in ashes! Blotted out
The story that it tells!
Alas!
We ne'er shall be without
A Mr. Donald Wells. (DAVID FREEMAN)

I think that it would be a pity
If bombs should fall on Shrewsbury City.
Yet it could do, I must confess,
With one inhabitant the less.
(DAVID FREEMAN)

So, Mr. Wells, you have outdone
The Goth, the Vandal and the Hun;
For they had not the *maladresse*
To air their folly in the Press. (E. HIBBERT)

If beauty, truth, and all things fair
Could burn and vanish in a trice
It would not harm the rats and mice.
(G. T. HOLMES)

"Not an iota"! Donald will drink and dine,
See "Pictures," and enjoy his little pleasures;
But, just as we don't force our pearls on swine,
They should not grudge to us what we deem treasures. (JASON)

Posterity, we learn, will feel no loss,
Though bombs make ashes of the Holy City:
The world will bear with fortitude this cross,
Since Shrewsbury—and Wells—are sitting pretty.
(ALLAN M. LAING)

The glory that was Rome now ends
(It never yet paid dividends). (ARNOLD LEVER)

TO MR. DONALD WELLS.

You would approve a blitz
That shattered Rome to bits?
How easily the Devil
Degrades us to his level! (E. M.)

Nero fiddled while Rome burned, they say;
But who was Rome and what was Nero, pray?
(VIOLET PALMER)

Da Romam flammis, flammis evertere prodest.
Mars iubet hoc, nec nos alma Minerva vetat.
Parcet enim lacrimis, meritam Pax crastina laudem
Reddet. Sic Puteus—cedit et ipse Nero.
(I. C. SAUL)

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